The Self and The System: Social Protection Experiences of Asylum Seekers and Refugees Living in Glasgow

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Abstract

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This thesis adopts a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm to explore asylum seekers' and refugees' (ASRs) experiences of social protection in Glasgow. ASRs are more prone to vulnerabilities and require social protection in their host societies. Using 50 semi-structured interviews (30 ASRs and 20 representatives from the state agencies and third sector) along with observation, this research focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of how social protection is experienced on the ground in Glasgow.

As in the wider literature, findings showed that there are significant gaps in the provision of social protection for ASRs in Glasgow. While ASRs have been portrayed as passive recipients of services and support, it emerged that ASRs have been actively negotiating and combining different yet distinct forms of social protection – formal (the state and the third sector), informal (social connections) and semi-formal (third sector provision through pubic donations) – to increase their access to overall social protection. This combination denotes the conditions of social protection assemblages. Further, this study emphasises that ASRs are not inherently vulnerable rather they have been vulnerablised by the state's support system. Also evident is the third sector's role in filling gaps caused by a lack of formal support. Findings also identified volunteering as a tool and support-seeking strategy for ASRs, who considered volunteering as a way to engage with their local community, interact and support themselves and others in need.

Findings have implications for informing policy and practice. Implications include the Scottish Government and the Glasgow City Council ensuring ASRs' access to formal social protection, empowering ASRs to use available resources, and increasing refugees' access to the labour market. Furthermore, this research contributes to migration and social protection literature by applying the concept of social protection and illustrates the significance and interconnectedness of various forms of social protection.

Key words: asylum seekers, refugees, social protection, vulnerablisation, integration, inclusion, third sector

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For me:

எந்நன்றி கொன்றார்க்கும் உய்வுண்டாம் உய்வில்லை
செய்ந்நன்றி கொன்ற மகற்கு.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by me and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for the award of any other degree.

Signed: _____

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Abbreviations

ASRs	Asylum Seekers and Refugees
AASC	Accommodation and Support Services Contracts
AHBT	Asylum Health Bridging Team
ASRs	Asylum seekers and refugees
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
COMPASS	Commercial and Operating Managers Procuring Asylum Support
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
EU	European Union
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GP	General practitioner
HIS	Holistic Integration Service
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MIN	Maryhill Integration Network
NASS	National Asylum Support Service
NGOs	Non-government organisations
NHS	National Health Service
NHSGCC	National Health Services Greater Glasgow and Clyde
RCOs	Refugee Community Organisations
SEIN	South East Integration Network
SRC	Scottish Refugee Council
TSOs	Third-sector organisations
UK	United Kingdom

1. Introduction

The impact of harsh migration controls, anti-immigrant policies and restrictions on service provision on asylum seekers and refugees' (ASRs) access to and experiences in host countries are well documented (Bloch and Schuster, 2002; Kneebone, 2009; Esses, Hamilton and Gaucher, 2017)[1]. In the UK, several new policies have been introduced in the past few years in the context of a 'hostile environment' to regulate the social protection services for ASRs. Hence, the extent to which social protection for ASRs is achieved in the UK needs to be examined.

This research adopted a predominant focus on the perceptions and experiences of ASRs, as it is beneficial to explore and examine the contemporary struggles from the perspective of migrants. However, it also includes staff from service providers explaining their views on the functioning of the social protection system and ASRs' experiences. A focus on Glasgow allows for an interesting exploration of these dynamics: firstly, since the city has been a major recipient of asylum seekers for many years, and secondly, because policy in Scotland in terms of refugee integration has changed, as have the initiatives in this regard at the city level.

This first chapter sets the rationale for this research and provides the overall background for the thesis, introducing the conceptual framework, the research questions and the methodology.

1.1. Context

The significance of migration as a socio-political focus in the UK today cannot be underestimated, nor can the way in which discussions and debates around migration are suffused with negative sentiment. In recent times, negative discourse around migration has played a role in shaping events that have taken place in the UK, such as the Leave vote in the Brexit referendum, the election of a majority Conservative government, the political response to the

[1] Mendeley (a reference manager) is used for referencing following the Edge Hill Harvard referencing style.

COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2020 immigration bill. The ways in which issues relating to migration have become enmeshed in these recent events aptly demonstrates why social protection for migrants is relevant and topical.

ASRs have long been a focus of concern in the UK and this is reflected in public and political discourse as well as in academic scholarship. Discussions about ASRs in the public domain are often imbued with negativity influenced by anti-immigration sentiments stemming from public and political opinion. Perceptions of ASRs are often concerned with them being a burden on the state (Wren, 2007; Alberti, 2017), bogus asylum claimants (Bloch, 2000; Stewart and Mulvey, 2014) and economic migrants (Liebling et al., 2014; Mayblin, 2017). Such negative discourses have an impact on immigration policies concerning ASRs and on the experiences of those who seek asylum and a safer, more secure life with dignity through the provision of social support in the UK. This is applied through the deterrence of migrants (Schuster, 2004), tighter border security and internal controls (Mulvey, 2010).

Negative discourses and anti-immigration sentiment affecting ASRs often involve a perceived distinction between so-called deserving and undeserving people in the UK (Sales, 2002; Strang and Ager, 2010). As people considered to be deserving, citizens have entitlements and full legal rights to access state welfare support. ASRs, on the other hand, are viewed within the host community as undeserving and do not have full rights; as a result of policies, they are restricted from accessing many mainstream provisions (Strang and Ager, 2010).

Indeed, numerous immigration policies that have emerged over the past three decades have succeeded in creating an unwelcoming atmosphere for ASRs in the UK (Phillimore, 2017). The unwelcoming atmosphere arising from negative discourses around ASRs and the rise of anti-immigrant sentiment is linked to multiple policies that seem to act against ASRs and their ability to settle and integrate into the receiving society (Mulvey, 2015). For example, the UK Government introduced a no-choice dispersal policy for ASRs to live in designated areas, which limited the access to local labour markets and restricted their movements within those resettled areas (Humphries, 2004;

Lewis, 2007a; Stewart and Shaffer, 2015). Asylum seekers do not have the right to work, and upon recognition as refugees, they must leave their state-provided accommodation facilities. Restrictions and controls in ASRs' access to the labour market, local housing, social services, health and engagement with institutions are all factors recognised to pose challenges to the integration and settlement in the UK (Phillimore, 2012; Mulvey, 2015; Platts-Fowler and Robinson, 2015).

ASRs' limited access to services negatively affects their experience of settlement; yet, their access to services has been continuously limited and ASRs often see service provision as unsatisfactory (Dwyer and Brown, 2008; Aspinall and Watters, 2010). Asylum seekers have often received low levels of support in the UK, resulting in destitution and poor standards of living and refugees have struggled to survive with limited opportunities (Phillimore, 2017, Mayblin and James, 2019). In the past two decades, ASRs' access to formal social protection has been more restricted in the UK. The restricted access, reduced entitlements and denied services for ASRs reflect the hostile, present-day policy changes in the UK. The UK context broadly, along with specific immigration policies that are creating barriers to ASRs' accessing services, are discouraging engagement with institutions, and are contributing to social isolation and discrimination (Mulvey, 2015). However, although the UK Government has restricted social protection for ASRs, as this research also shows, the sub-national and city-level approaches may not always comply with this.

There are significant differences between the way the Scottish and English approach support for ASRs. Social protection for ASRs in Scotland is complex due to the devolved context (Bowes, Ferguson and Sim, 2009; Stewart and Mulvey, 2014) in which the UK and Scottish Governments have different responsibilities in this area. While the UK Government has the reserved powers in asylum policy and welfare benefits, the Scottish Government holds the powers in local services, such as housing, healthcare, education and integration (Mulvey, 2009, 2015).

As mentioned above, the UK Government focuses on making ASRs' lives harder in the UK by controlling access to social support and protracting the processing of asylum claims. However, the Scottish Government prioritises the integration and settlement of ASRs through their devolved service provision. Scotland's New Scots refugee integration strategy 2018–2022 (hereinafter referred to as New Scots 2018) aims to create 'a welcoming Scotland where refugees and asylum seekers are able to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive' (Scottish Government, 2018: 10). The new strategy followed a previous one (hereinafter referred to as New Scots 2014) that focused on the integration of refugees in Scotland's communities with attention on service provision (2014–2017). This contrasts sharply with the Westminster Government's integration policy, according to which integration begins only upon receipt of refugee status.

These separate and contrasting policy responsibilities have generated tension between the UK and Scottish Governments and have further challenged the local service provision for ASRs. For instance, Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon described the UK government's post-Brexit immigration plan as devastating for Scotland, leading to a renewed call for devolved power over immigration (Brooks, 2020). Even though Scotland introduced its own measures to assist ASRs in certain devolved areas, ASRs must adhere to the UK Immigration Acts and Policies when it comes to overall migration governance. Asylum seekers in Scotland are thus positioned between the reserved and devolved context where they go through the difficult and demeaning asylum application process while receiving formal and semi-formal support through various Scottish authorities and the third sector.

The 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act led to the introduction of the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) – a centralised single government agency to facilitate the dispersal support of asylum seekers in the UK. Under this regulation, asylum seekers have been dispersed on a no-choice basis throughout the UK to avoid congestion in the south-east of England. In Scotland, Glasgow is the only city to receive asylum seekers under the dispersal policy, and it is 'increasingly being recognised as a cluster area where reception and resettlement have worked relatively well, despite initial

teething problems' (Wren, 2007: 409). Several studies have found that ASRs receive positive receptions in Glasgow (Mulvey, 2011; Kearns and Whitley, 2015; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). However, there are also indications of negative discourses around ASRs in Scotland, such as racism and hostile attitudes from the section of local communities who perceive ASRs to be receiving preferential treatment (McCollum, Nowok and Tindal, 2014).

The positive and welcoming environment for ASRs in Glasgow has been developed through the specific actions implemented at the local level. Additionally to the Scottish Government's overall integration strategies, the Glasgow City Council (GCC) established the Refugee Support Team and a group of refugee integration networks with the support of the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) (Kearns and Whitley, 2015). Furthermore, specific projects have been implemented to increase ASRs' access to social protection in Glasgow, such as the Holistic Integration Service (HIS)[2] and Refugee Peer Education for Health and Wellbeing Project[3] (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016).

Despite the positive attitude and approach toward ASRs, Glasgow, as a deprived city with significant economic issues, faces severe challenges in providing services for ASRs (Mulvey, 2010; Kearns et al., 2017). Community cohesion and reception are lower in more deprived communities. In particular, public hostility has increased due to demands for specialist services for ASRs, while the local community also demand their needs being met (Wren, 2007). Kearns and Whitley (2015: 2123) argue that allocating regeneration areas in Glasgow to settle ASRs has negatively shaped their social integration, particularly the 'feeling of trust, reliance and safety, neighbourly behaviours and neighbourhood satisfaction'.

Furthermore, there are issues with the provision of formal support for ASRs in Glasgow. For instance, a lack of available houses and sub-standard housing in Glasgow contributed to struggles in meeting ASRs' accommodation needs

[2] A partnership led by the SRC with the British Red Cross (BRC), Bridges Programmes, Glasgow Clyde College and Workers Educational Association.

[3] A collaboration between the National Health Service Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) and SRC to train refugees to be peer educators on health and wellbeing issues and health access.

(Netto, 2011a; Kearns and Whitley, 2015). A lack of appropriate information and awareness about services have also been identified as significant barriers for ASRs' access to services in Glasgow (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017).

Therefore, ASRs continuously face challenges to access social protection, which has implications for social inclusion and integration. As Bloch and Schuster (2002: 408) state, 'those who claim asylum are unable to begin the process of integration, remaining in limbo, often without access to language training, training for work, education, secure and/or legal employment and family reunion'. In other words, statutory agencies are neglecting the complex needs of ASRs who are engaged in fulfilling their English language requirements and trying to understand the existing system so they may apply for mainstream welfare services. Research has shown structural failures in access to services in Glasgow, which have disrupted ASRs' integration and settlement (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). Therefore, ASRs often feel vulnerable due to uncertainties, the threat of destitution and deprivation, housing issues and a lack of social bonds with people of similar background in Glasgow.

1.2. Current study

Against the previously outlined context relating to ASRs in the UK, Scotland and Glasgow, the research conducted herein aims to understand ASRs' access to, and experiences with, the social protection system and services, and how their lives are affected in terms of wellbeing, adaptation and social inclusion. Social protection as an approach includes 'interventions from public, private and voluntary organisations and informal networks to support communities, households and individuals in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome risks and vulnerabilities' (Shepherd, Marcus and Barrientos, 2004: 8). Social protection involves formal elements: state-led welfare schemes including social security and welfare benefits, and informal elements, broadly consisting of family, friendship, interpersonal ties and community-based systems (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011).

As established, despite the overall positive approach at devolved and city level, access to formal social protection is problematic for ASRs in Glasgow, where asylum seekers have limited or no access to certain formal support while refugees struggle to access mainstream services due to insufficient support. Although formal social protection that the state provides aims to reduce vulnerabilities and increase ASRs' safety and security, access to formal social protection might not in fact be possible (Sales, 2002; Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). ASRs are often hosted in countries where there have been reductions and restrictions to formal provisions or tightened eligibility criteria and where the degree of formal social protection has been limited. Scholars note that ASRs are unable to take advantage of available services because of restrictions placed on their social rights (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019) and because of barriers that hinder their access to formal social protection (Sainsbury, 2013; Ambrosini, 2016). They hence struggle to overcome the bureaucratic obstacles to access social protection in the host country (Long and Sabates-Wheeler, 2017). It is therefore important to determine to what extent ASRs can access formal social protection and to better understand how they overcome difficulties encountered in their day-to-day life.

Within the formal social protection context in Glasgow, the existing literature focuses more on different forms of state-provided protection (Netto, 2011a; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). However, much less attention is given to the third sector as another actor involved in the formal provision of protection. Although scholars discuss the third sector in Glasgow (Fyfe and Milligan, 2003; Wren, 2004, 2007; Piacentini, 2012), there is a need for more focused and contemporary research that considers the different forms of social protection and investigates the resource environment from a more holistic perspective. The increasing numbers of ASRs in Glasgow requires the involvement of organisations throughout Scotland to welcome, offer support and address the needs of this vulnerable group. Unlike the New Scots 2014, in the New Scots 2018, the Scottish Government recognised and highlighted the importance of the third-sector organisations (TSOs) in helping ASRs. In particular, to achieve the objectives of helping ASRs to settle in their new homes and communities, the Scottish Government set actions to involve

TSOs in various stages of the process. This involves local authorities working with TSOs to plan and deliver support for ASRs. There is a growing involvement of TSOs with experiences of working with ASRs in public-funded projects in Glasgow, for example, the HIS and integration networks. A study focusing on the functions of the state and the third sector would help to identify the different roles these entities play and the interactions between the two, as well as any tensions and discontinuities in the provision of social protection services.

Further to the formal mechanism, this research has found that migrants are using informal social protection to access social protection. Informal social protection is mainly provided by social networks based on collective norms such as solidarity, reciprocity, or obligations (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). In other words, migrants build their social networks with a combination of individuals and organisations based on different needs and relationships, such as common interest, economic exchange, information sharing, friendship, and social activities (Poros, 2011; Amelina et al., 2012). Therefore, informal social protection provided by social networks often plays a crucial role in the daily lives of ASRs. As social protection scholars point out, the informal element is significant in supplementing support because access to formal social protection in a new host country or society is often restricted due to political decisions and delayed access that can go on for many months or even years after arrival (Avato, Koettl and Sabates-Wheeler, 2010). This research goes further to recognise the informal part of the formal social protection system, and the way the formal and informal operate in tandem or functionally linked to each other.

As ASRs are systematically restricted from access to formal social protection, they actively seek help to meet their daily needs and objectives through informal networks. ASRs often used informal social protection for assistance in gaining access to formal social protection services, such as interpretation, financial support, and psychosocial support (Zetter and Pearl, 2000; Cheung and Phillimore, 2013; Strang and Quinn, 2019). In particular, informal networks established within host communities and well-established ethnic networks have been found to provide enhanced access to formal social

protection (Cheung and Phillimore, 2014). Therefore, informal social protection plays a vital gap-filling role and complements formal social protection while depending on the state, market and third-sector provisions (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). However, there are also concerns about ASRs' abilities in building informal networks and using them to their maximum potential for their adaptation and inclusion (Phillimore, 2012). The research conducted in this thesis investigates in greater detail the development of informal social protection strategies among ASRs in Glasgow and the role of informal social protection in shaping ASRs' experiences and subsistence.

Research on the topic of social protection has also shown that migrants do not draw a clear-cut distinction between formal and informal social protection; rather, they benefit from using these two mechanisms (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015; Faist et al., 2015). Amelina et al. (2012) describe the combination of different forms of social protection as 'assemblages' based on an individual's agency in gaining access to protective resources. Faist and Bilecen (2015: 282) identify this interrelationship as a significant factor that influences 'the distribution of life chances'. Therefore, while investigating the different forms of social protection, this research also examines how ASRs are using 'assemblages' of formal and informal mechanisms to access and use services. In doing so, the study elaborates on the topic of assemblages of social protection, providing rich empirical evidence.

1.3. Research aims

Although there have been studies about social welfare and integration for ASRs in the UK, research in the realm of social protection in Scotland is a relatively unique undertaking; approaches, scopes and foci of existing research in other parts of the UK have been different from the research undertaken here. Therefore, the aim of this research is *to contribute to current debates on the subject of social protection for ASRs from a Scottish context*. In doing so, the emphasis is on understanding the role of social protection in shaping ASRs' daily lives, to shed light on how they address their social protection needs in a new and largely hostile environment in the UK. Within this research, I analyse the way in which ASRs access, coordinate and

experience various available resources to achieve their social protection needs. Although there is existing research about social welfare, integration and polices for ASRs, there remains a need for a holistic investigation to understand the links between these domains and the impact of social protection. It is also important to study what works, what fails and what can shape policy and practice in the future of service provision (Phillimore, 2012). This study examines whether, and how, the social protection services provided to ASRs are facilitating their integration and social inclusion

The research conducted herein also aims *to provide policy recommendations for ASRs' access to formal and informal social protection*. Although this is not a large-scale study, improved understanding of current practices and opportunities available for ASRs could facilitate adapting and building effective social protection mechanisms to better meet their needs. Given the diverse and complex needs of ASRs, it is essential to explore the factors that can contribute to a more coordinated and integrated service provision approach. Findings have the potential to contribute to the design of social protection services, programmes, systems and policies. In the current climate, ASRs' experiences would be central to drawing policy implications such as inclusive actions to remove barriers and promote social integration. This research informs policy and practice by studying ASRs' experiences alongside input from service provider staff. Findings have and will be shared with policymakers and service providers through local conferences, network meetings, and other relevant forums, depending on available opportunities[4,5]. A summary of the key policy recommendations is included in the final chapter.

1.4. Research questions

Despite these challenges, investigating the role of different forms of social protection is central to this research. Since the aforementioned literature focuses more on economic migrants, there is a gap in the forced migration

[4] Opportunities to disseminate depends on my permission to leave to remain in the UK.
[5] Findings were presented in the Academics-Meet-Practitioners Impact Event organized by the Migration Working Group – North West, Edge Hill University on 22nd February 2019. https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/socialsciences/research/migration-working-group-north-west/news-and-events/academics-meet-practitioners-impact-event/

literature about social protection for ASRs and their ability to make use of formal and informal social protection resources. The research conducted for this thesis contributes to filling that gap.

Within this background, this thesis addresses the following questions:

- What are asylum seekers' and refugees' experiences of formal and informal social protection?
- To what extent and in what ways does social protection affect their initial experiences upon arrival?
- How and to what extent does access to social protection facilitate and promote social inclusion and integration of asylum seekers and refugees?

To answer these questions, I conducted 16 weeks of fieldwork in Glasgow in the summer of 2018. The research was conducted using semi-structured interviews, participant observation and informal conversations. During the fieldwork, I used semi-structured interviews with 30 ASRs and 20 staff from service providers working in the state and non-state institutions and organisations. They were identified through purposive and snowball sampling approaches. A thorough discussion of methodology is included in Chapter 4.

1.5. Thesis outline

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter establishes the framework of this research by presenting the research context, research topic, rationale, research questions and structure of the thesis. In this chapter, I set out the key research questions and rationale by emphasising the conceptual/theoretical and empirical gaps in the field of social protection.

Chapter 2: Context

Further to the initial discussion, a context chapter is presented to provide background information relating to the UK, Scottish and Glasgow context. The

key aspects included in this chapter are the reserved matters (asylum and immigration), areas of joint working (dispersal of asylum seekers) and devolved matters (housing, education, healthcare and benefits). In particular, more attention is given to Scottish integration policies and local Glasgow-level service provision and dilemmas.

Chapter 3: Concepts

In this chapter, I discuss the main concepts employed in my research process. It is divided into three parts: social protection, vulnerabilities and integration. The section addressing social protection provides the foundation for this research. The second part focuses on vulnerability, to conceptualise migrant-specific issues. Finally, a section on integration examines the links between integration and social protection.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter discusses the research approach including the research design, sampling and field setting, data collection and analysis, reflexivity and positionality, and ethical considerations. The chapter begins by justifying the selection of a qualitative approach and the interpretivist paradigm. The relevant academic literature is incorporated to reflect on the qualitative approach before moving onto sampling and research setting. I then describe the data collection process and analysis methods applied in this research and elaborate on the process of data analysis. The final section of this chapter presents the ethical issues considered in designing and conducting this research, such as maleficence and beneficence, confidentiality and informed consent, and my own reflexivity and accountable positionality in this research.

Chapter 5: Experiences of Formal and Informal Social Protection

The first empirical chapter focuses on formal and informal social protection experiences of ASRs in Glasgow. In this chapter, I discuss four key formal social protection elements (housing, financial benefits, healthcare and education) and explore ASRs' experiences of accessing them. Findings showed that participants faced challenges in access to these services regardless of their immigration status. In particular, ASRs expressed more

negative experiences when dealing with housing and financial benefits than with education and healthcare. Meanwhile, informal social protection played a significant role in facilitating their access to these services via sharing information, guidance and support. This further illustrated the ways in which participants combined various forms of social protection (formal, informal and semi-formal) to achieve their overall social protection.

Chapter 6: Everyday Experiences of Being an Asylum Seeker and Refugee in Glasgow

This chapter presents and discusses the empirical data related to ASRs' everyday experiences in Glasgow giving more attention to migrant-specific vulnerabilities and agency, which shows how ASRs have been vulnerablised by state controls, practices and provision. In line with that, this chapter presents an empirical discussion of participants' views on their living conditions and neighbourhood relationships, participants' interpretations of living without meaningful activities, the struggles of living in an uncertain situation due to the asylum process, lack of information and unfamiliarity with their new locality, and difficulties with language and wellbeing. Key findings include ASRs' experiences of living in limbo and lack of opportunities to engage in meaningful activities, such as employment. Additionally, participants' wellbeing and trust in the system has been affected by a lack of support from the state.

Chapter 7: Promoting Integration and Social Inclusion: The Role of Social Protection.

In this chapter, I analyse the extent to which, and how, social protection promotes and facilitates ASRs' social inclusion and integration in Glasgow. It begins with presenting participants' views of integration and provides a platform for further discussion. I then move to present the empirical findings of how formal and informal social protection contributed to integration and social inclusion and vice versa. This chapter concludes by investigating the barriers to integration and social inclusion. Findings identified TSOs as the key sector to promote social inclusion and integration through drop-in and other integration activities. Additionally, participants engaged in volunteering

activities to get involved in community activities and improve their sense of belonging in society.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, I summarise my main research findings and state the contribution to knowledge that I have made in conducting this study. A significant portion of this chapter discusses theoretical, methodological, empirical and policy implications derived from this research. This chapter, in particular, highlights social protection as a theoretical lens to examine ASRs' experiences on the ground. According to the findings, even though services and resources – while limited – are available, ASRs could not access them due to legal barriers, bureaucratic challenges and other practical issues. Meanwhile, services provided to ASRs were highlighted as inadequate and sub-standard; examples are housing and financial support. Furthermore, many ASRs depended on the third sector to increase their access to social protection. Significant dilemmas are created by the reserved and devolved context within the UK and Scotland. The key policy recommendation is to raise the Scottish Government's ability to provide direct support to dispersed asylum seekers in Glasgow. Moreover, there should be more initiatives to increase ASRs' ability to access services and resources.

2. Context

In this chapter, I provide the contextual background in which the study took place. Information about three settings have been analysed: the UK, Scotland and Glasgow. The first section of this chapter explores the legal and policy context around ASRs in the UK. Although the research was conducted in Glasgow (Scotland), it is necessary to understand the wider UK asylum context. In particular, the hostile environment for ASRs in the UK has been highlighted to show the structural and social issues that affect ASRs and service provision. In the second section, I discuss the Scottish context to outline key approaches taken at the regional level to improve ASRs' lives. Emphasis is given to the Scottish integration approach advocating that all ASRs in Scotland should be able to integrate from day one of their arrival through a two-way process. In the final section, I provide context about Glasgow, including local approaches and initiatives to service provision, and briefly discuss the socio-economic and political background.

2.1. The United Kingdom

Although the UK has seen phases of migration, the most significant influx of contemporary migration occurred after 2011 due to the refugee crisis (Geddes and Scholten, 2016). A rising number of conflicts in Middle-Eastern and Sub-Saharan African countries contributed to the so-called refugee crisis between 2012 and 2015. Indeed, the recent spike of ASRs seeking refuge in Europe because of the 2014 Syrian crisis has seen a further increase in the numbers of asylum claims (Crawley and Skleparis, 2017). Despite the high number of individuals reaching the borders of Europe, the UK has received a relatively small number of asylum applications (30,603 applications in 2016).

The topic of the refugee crisis and the asylum process, however, gained more political attention from the early 1990s. Since then, the issue of asylum has specifically been a key focus of political and social debates around migration, and UK governments in power have been playing an active role in problematising asylum in the UK (Mayblin, 2014; Geddes and Scholten,

2016). Although the UK is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, UK governments have been nevertheless implementing restrictive and hostile immigration policies to prevent the arrival of asylum seekers and asylum claims (Zetter et al., 2006). The UK government recognises its international obligations and the principles attached to ASRs but undermines those same obligations by means of specific national legislations, regulations, procedures and practices. El-Enany (2017: 363) observes that the UK government is performing a cherry-picking process by failing to opt-in to legally binding legislation ensuring standards safeguarding 'the one chance of asylum' rule, while taking part in the Dublin system. In a similar manner, Bolderson (2011) states that the UK government has been engaging in a selective process whereby individuals or group of people have been preferred based on the state's interest, which is reflected in the current immigration circumstances and respective welfare provision.

Debates around ASRs are positioned within the broader issues of border control and management – key points in the contemporary political agenda – which the state has been continuously promoting as required to ensure that refugee status is given only to genuine asylum seekers. Hansen (2014) notes that the UK has always focused on controlling, managing or limiting the refugee influx. In particular, the UK government aimed to reduce the ASR numbers owing to widespread concerns about increasing asylum applications. Mayblin (2017) states that the UK government's concerns over the numbers have seen a promotion of 'managed' migration. Narratives suggesting that many asylum seekers were bogus and undeserving of mainstream welfare support underpinned the managed migration approach. Dummett (2001: 44) claims that the UK government 'repeat incessantly that most of the asylum-seekers are mere "economic migrants"'. This phrase has been used to blur the distinction between refugees and economic migrants – the former having well-founded fears of persecution – to convey unjustifiably that the motives of those claiming asylum are 'more trivial and unworthy' (ibid: 44). As a result, the UK government's managed migration approach increased control of external borders and the speedy legal process of asylum claim applications (Gibney, 2011; Geddes and Scholten, 2016).

Historically, the UK government has moved from an inclusive approach to an increasingly legislated exclusion of non-residents and non-nationals (Bolderson, 2011), in particular, asylum seekers. The state has been highly selective and controlling in their immigration policies and practices. Prior to the implementation of the most hostile asylum policies in the 1990s, the UK government has introduced measures to control outsiders, such as the visa restrictions on nationals of countries producing high numbers of asylum seekers (105 such countries were added by 1996) and fines (of £2,000) imposed on airlines and ferry operators for every transported passenger without valid travel documents under the 1987 Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act. El-Enany (2020) described such controls as racial bordering. Within that the UK government has been using strategies of immobilisation to prevent and control the entry of racialised populations into the state. Racial bordering thus subjects ASRs to the 'operation of internal borders and are disproportionately vulnerable' (El-Enany, 2020: 4).

Along with bordering practices, the UK has made welfare provision the bargaining chip or 'handmaiden' of immigration policies (Bolderson, 2011: 224). Successive UK governments have reduced welfare entitlements with a focus on denying access to labour markets until asylum seekers have been verified as genuine (Geddes, 2003). Major legislative changes that occurred from the 1990s focused on limiting the numbers of asylum seekers and making life difficult for those seeking asylum in the UK (Webber and Peirce, 2012; Mayblin, 2017). In 1993, the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act introduced a 'fast-track' asylum application procedure, detention of asylum seekers and reduction of benefits entitlement for asylum seekers. The limitations on the rights to appeal as part of this Act was, in particular, followed by an unprecedented increase in refusals: the rate of refusal was 14% before the Act and increased to 72% after the Act (Hayter, 2004). The 1996 Immigration and Asylum Act was introduced to reduce asylum claims and welfare restrictions through two levels of welfare 'disentitlements' for in-country and port of entry asylum applications (Zetter and Pearl, 2000).

Among the existing UK immigration legislation, the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act plays a crucial role in the current asylum process since it created

NASS. NASS was established to centralise the asylum support system and manage dispersal or redistribution of asylum seekers on a UK-wide basis (Hynes, 2009; Mulvey, 2010). A key element of dispersal strategy is to forcibly move asylum seekers away from London and south-east of England to tackle the increasing numbers of asylum seekers in those locations and to relieve pressure in those areas (Schuster and Bloch, 2005; Mulvey, 2015). The 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act placed more restrictions on ASRs, such as providing financial support below poverty levels, having only a 28-day move-on period from their accommodation; while at the same time, it increased powers for immigration officials (Phillips, 2006; Mulvey, 2010). In the meantime, the introduction of NASS exemplified the state's control in the asylum process when the Home Office, a ministerial department, became involved in the provision of benefits and housing for asylum seekers. Furthermore, the consecutive Acts to date introduced more controls, such as the removal of the right to employment, and permanent refugee status replaced by a temporary period (5-years).

The brief outline of actions implemented through these immigration Acts demonstrates the UK government's controlling approaches towards migration. Sales (2007: 152) emphasises that under both Conservative and Labour governments, asylum policies have continued 'to treat asylum seekers with suspicion, as a risk to society rather than as people themselves at risk'. Indeed, harsh measures have been introduced into the process of claiming asylum: detention, denial of social benefits, no-choice dispersal accommodation, and subsistence at less than 50% of poverty levels (Briskman and Cemlyn, 2005). Notably, the dispersal policy has been criticised for housing asylum seekers in highly socially deprived areas (Phillips, 2006). Stewart (2009) emphasises that the process of dispersal ignored several factors, such as the ethnic composition of localities, existing community support networks, language support and employment opportunities. In particular, moving asylum seekers away from their friends, families and other support services has been criticised because it limits their ability to settle in the UK (Zetter and Pearl, 2000; Phillimore and Goodman, 2008), and with reference to the focus of this research, it creates barriers to

accessing informal social protection. Asylum seekers consequently experience feelings of isolation and harassment in their dispersed areas (Phillips, 2006).

Meanwhile, Mulvey (2010: 439) suggests that the hostile policy measures are not only the result of 'changing international migratory dynamics, [but also] … an element of reactive policy-making, combined with populism'. Crucially, the negative media-framing of ASRs reinforced the strict measures taken in the UK; ASRs are often dehumanised and perceived negatively, evident in the public discourse (Crawley, Mcmahon and Jones, 2016). Concerns about immigration, fuelled by the rise of populist and anti-immigration political movements (for example, the UK Independence Party, UKIP), have significantly shaped the migration context in the UK (Geddes and Scholten, 2016). Humphries (2004) pointed out that the UK policies are exclusively designed to control people's movement and prevent the entry of those who are not white, western and European.

In summary, it is clear that the UK government has introduced strict controls and specifically created a hostile environment that embodies the UK government's negative attitude towards asylum seekers in the UK: an unwelcoming environment subject to ongoing legislative changes. It could be argued that the treatment of asylum seekers since the 1990s exemplifies the UK government's role as a state involved in structurally undermining the needs of asylum seekers and creating vulnerability through their immigration control. While engaging in a selective process of who enters, determining conditions and for how long they may stay, the state, on the one hand, has been categorising people seeking humanitarian protection as asylum seekers, resettlement (quota) refugees and undocumented migrants. With this categorization, the state, on the other hand, removes asylum seekers' entitlements for mainstream benefits (de-select) and provides inadequate and sub-standard support (selected for insufficient support) (Bolderson, 2011). Consequently, asylum seekers have been unfairly treated on the basis of their immigration status. Anderson, Sharma and Wright (2009: 8) argue that 'the state is deeply implicated in constructing vulnerability through immigration controls and practices […] they produce and reinforce relations of

dependency and power'. The impact of state control leading to the vulnerablisation of asylum seekers is well documented in this thesis (See, Chapter 5 and 6).

Although the UK government has been criticised for its controlling approach to migration and role in creating and maintaining a hostile environment for ASRs they approach integration of refugees more positively (Ager and Strang, 2004a, 2008; Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019). The UK National Refugee Integration Strategy defines integration as 'a process that takes place when refugees are empowered to achieve their full potential as members of British society, to contribute to the community and to become fully able to exercise the rights and responsibilities shared with other residents' (Phillimore and Goodson, 2010: 181). While the UK's integration strategy focuses on increasing refugees' access to services and support to enhance their integration into their new society, asylum seekers have been ignored and not consulted about their needs and priorities in the integration policy. Nevertheless, the report on indicators of integration that the Home Office commissioned views integration as a process and asserts that successful integration is an achievement in domains such as means and markers, social connections, facilitators and foundation (Ager and Strang, 2004a). The indicators of integration framework has been used as a guide for developing policies and practices for refugees, to ensure that all parties understand their rights and responsibilities and to enable a sense of equity (Ager and Strang, 2004a).

The introduction of integration as a key policy goal in the UK, for instance, led to the expansion of roles for voluntary and community groups in supporting refugees in settlement areas (Zetter and Pearl, 2000). These organisations have been funded through early integration policies to assist refugee integration by providing access to information and peer support (Cheung and Phillimore, 2013). In particular, refugee groups were offered funding to establish their own community organisations (Zetter and Pearl, 2000; Phillimore, 2012). These local refugee community organisations (RCOs) have been seen as a well-established, ideal structure to deliver government support to refugees (Griffiths et al, 2005; Strang and Ager, 2010).

In the UK, the integration approach is based on multicultural society or ethnic pluralism, where different groups of people co-exist while retaining their cultural identities (Ager and Strang, 2008). However, there has been a shift in the public discourse around migration. In the last two decades, growing populist xenophobia, an economic crisis and anti-immigration narratives have shaped debates around migration (Ager and Strang, 2008). For example, Home Secretary Theresa May's speech in 2013 highlighted 'a hostile environment for illegal migrants' and emphasised the UK government's nationhood and assimilation approach (Travis, 2013). It has been suggested that anti-immigrant sentiment influenced the results of the 2016 EU referendum and subsequent elections: results that contributed to further restrictions in the field of immigration (Goodwin and Milazzo, 2017; Shabi, 2019).

2.2. Scotland

Scotland, self-described as 'a diverse, complex, multicultural and multilingual nation' (Scottish Government, 2015: 10), positions itself as a 'progressive, outward looking nation' in relation to migration policy (2018b: 5). Scotland is a country that has had low levels of migration in the past. However, in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of people born outside Scotland moving to the country (Scottish Government, 2010). As of mid-2017, it was estimated that 7% of Scotland's population were non-British migrants and 142,000 were international migrants (National Records of Scotland, 2018). According to the Scottish Government, asylum seekers represent only a small proportion of the overall migration to Scotland, where Glasgow is the main dispersal area for asylum seekers; 10% of individuals seeking asylum in the UK have been accommodated in Glasgow (Mulvey, 2015; Scottish Government, 2018).

The asylum and immigration matters in Scotland are complex due to the devolved context (Mulvey, 2015). At the policy level, it is perhaps clear that responsibilities around ASRs are divided between the Scottish and the UK governments. While the decision-making around immigration is reserved for the UK government, the Scottish Government has the responsibilities related

to service provision. Services for ASRs include education, healthcare, housing, social work and integration support (Scottish Government, 2018). This separation around migration governance blurs boundaries and creates tensions between the reserved and devolved policy matters, and contributes to a politically hostile environment between Holyrood and Westminster (Stewart, 2009; Mulvey, 2015). Tensions between the multi-level forms of government have led to a divergence in the way ASRs have been approached and treated (Mulvey, 2015; Scholten, 2016). The UK government aims at limiting pull factors of migration, by making asylum seekers' lives difficult through their decision-making powers about asylum status and the level of support (Mulvey, 2009, 2015). Conversely, the Scottish Government focuses on prioritising the integration of everyone from day one of their arrival in Scotland, even though reserved immigration policies are affecting Scotland's ability and capacity to support ASRs (Wren, 2007, Mulvey, 2015).

Scotland's integration strategy aims to 'enable all refugees and asylum seekers to integrate into the communities from day one of arrival and not just when refugee status is granted' (Scottish Government, 2017: 20). The Scottish strategy differs from the wider UK integration approach, which begins only after the receipt of refugee status and where asylum seekers are considered ineligible for integration. In Scotland, integration is approached as a two-way process rather than a one-way method that places the responsibility only on the newcomers (Mulvey, 2015). The New Scots 2018 defines integration as a 'long term, two-way process, involving positive changes in both individuals and host community, which leads to cohesive, diverse communities' (Scottish Government, 2018: 10).

While focusing on integration from day one, and involving ASRs in the process, the Scottish strategy also recognises a rights-based approach, inclusive communities, and partnership and collaboration. A rights-based approach aims to empower and inform ASRs about their rights and entitlements to obtain the required benefits and services. The Scottish Government further aims to promote inclusivity as the key to 'building stronger, resilient communities which enable everyone to be active citizens' through the use of this strategy (Scottish Government, 2018: 12)**.** The Scottish

strategy highlights the importance of partnership and collaboration in which action plans are devised with the support of local authorities, the third sector, the private sector and RCOs (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016).

Meantime, the Scottish Government has a strong commitment to service provision for ASRs in Scotland. Specific policies are in places to ensure access for ASRs to services, such as health, housing and education, and a high quality of available support. Indeed, the Scottish guidance for healthcare providers and the New Scots 2018 specifies that ASRs, including failed asylum claimants, are eligible to receive NHS services on the same basis as citizens. While they remain in Scotland, anyone who has applied for asylum, whether pending or unsuccessful, is entitled to treatment on the same basis as any permanent resident (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016). In other words, individuals will not be treated differently or be discriminated against when accessing NHS treatment or care in Scotland based on the status of their asylum claim. The NHS (General Medical Services Contracts) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 ensures that any individuals (including ASRs) cannot be refused access to services based upon their race, gender, class, age, religion, disability and so forth. An application can be rejected solely upon the basis of an individual not living in the practice area. In 2012, the NHSGCC introduced the Asylum Health Bridging Team (AHBT) – a dedicated service that provides initial screening for all newly arrived asylum seekers and allocates them a general practice (GP). Since then the initial encounter with primary care services in Glasgow has been through the AHBT (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, 2020).

While the asylum accommodation is centrally managed, the Scottish Government has control over the local housing (Glen and Lindsay, 2014). The Equality Act 2010 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 promote equal opportunities and fair access to housing and housing services. Further to the role of ensuring housing for all, the Scottish Government also requires social housing providers, housing associations and private landlords to follow the legislative framework to meet the standards of housing (Glen and Lindsay, 2014; Mulvey, 2015; Moore, 2017; Archer et al., 2018). Housing providers including local authorities in Scotland should fulfil the required housing

standards and physical conditions. Furthermore, the Scottish Housing Act ensures that local authorities adhere to their legal duty to assist homeless people, prevent homelessness and to provide, at the very least, emergency or temporary accommodation. This policy is significant because asylum seekers are prone to becoming homeless when they are required to vacate the asylum accommodation within 28 days of receiving refugee status. As per this policy, refugees who decide to continue to stay in Glasgow have been referred to GCC to avoid becoming homeless due to the challenges they face in gaining access to housing (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017).

Moreover, the Scottish Government, maintaining its strategy to enable all ASRs to integrate from day one, has taken steps to encourage them to get involved in education. In Scotland, while refugees have access to further and higher education as does any legal resident in the country, asylum seekers only have access to part-time or non-advanced courses in colleges. To promote education for asylum seekers, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) waives fees to attend colleges part-time or to take non-advanced courses, including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses (part-time or full-time) (Scottish Funding Council, 2019). Refugees in Scotland can apply to have tuition fees paid by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland to pursue their higher education goals (studying full-time for a first degree or equivalent) (Scottish Government, 2018). In particular, the New Scots 2018 stresses that 'being able to communicate confidently with people, including neighbours, shop workers or members of a local community group, helps people to feel settled, build social connections and be involved in their local area' (Scottish Government, 2018: 51). Along with this strategy the role of further education colleges and the community-based provision has been highlighted as significant to enable ASRs to participate and to integrate into Scotland.

Meanwhile, the outcomes of the Scottish Government's approach to 'encourage and facilitate integration as soon as an asylum seeker arrives in Scotland' (Mulvey, 2015: 365) have been reflected in the positive public opinion toward migrants in Scotland, where public attitude is relatively positive when compared with the rest of the UK. McCollum et al. (2014:79) studying British and Scottish social attitudes suggest that attitudes in Scotland are 'less

hostile' than attitudes in England. The authors further highlight that the positive attitude of politicians in Scotland has played a significant role in establishing a positivity towards migrants. Nonetheless, despite the positive public attitude, there is still growing opposition to immigration in Scotland. Lewis (2006) suggests that hostile views still exist due to opinions around genuine and bogus ASRs, and hence, positive attitudes have been taken only towards those who are seen as genuine ASRs. Blinder (2014) highlights that most Scottish people support reduced immigration. In this case, they welcome skilled workers and students while supporting the reduction of other migrant categories. The impact of a place is also little researched, and focusing on the day-to-day experiences of ASRs, as this research does, sheds light on attitudes towards immigration at the local level.

2.3. Glasgow

In Scotland, Glasgow is widely recognised as one of the most diverse cities due to the considerable increase in the numbers of the ethnic minority population. According to the latest census report, the ethnic minority population has increased from 13% to 21% of the total population, from 73,000 in 2001 to 127,000 in 2011. From a net migration perspective, the National Records of Scotland (2020) indicate that Glasgow city has the highest net migration rate out of the 32 council areas in Scotland for the period of 2018–2019. It had an increase of 910 people from 5,360 individuals in 2017–2018. Across Glasgow, the size of ethnic minority populations varies in each neighbourhood. According to the latest census details from 2011, the size of the non-White population ranges from 2% (Springboig and Barlanark) to 56% (Pollockshields East). Each neighbourhood in Glasgow has seen an increased number of non-White residents from 2001 to 2011 (Walsh, 2019; Nixon, 2016).

Since the introduction of the dispersal policy, Glasgow receives the largest numbers of asylum seekers in the UK (Mulvey, 2010). GCC is the only Scottish local authority to participate in this dispersal scheme. Significantly, it is also the largest dispersal location in the UK (Mulvey, 2015; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). Since 2000, Glasgow has received approximately 10% of

the total number of asylum seekers in the UK (Mulvey, 2015; Scottish Government, 2018). As per the latest statistics, there are nearly 5,000 asylum seekers receiving asylum support (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), 2019). Among them, 80% of asylum seekers with active asylum claims are receiving section 95 support (cash support and/or accommodation) and 20% are receiving section 4 support[6] (non-cash support and accommodation) (Kearns and Whitley, 2015). Most of these asylum seekers are from the Middle East and African countries, such as Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In Glasgow, the majority (90%) of asylum seekers are accommodated around the city in regeneration areas (Kearns and Whitley, 2015), despite these areas having little experience in meeting ASRs' needs (Stirling, Wilson and McConnachie, 2001; Taylor, 2009). Furthermore, although it has been difficult to provide the numbers of ASRs in Glasgow, due to data being unavailable or unreliable and post-refugee status movements (Mulvey, 2009), there are around 20,000 refugees in Glasgow.

Nevertheless, asylum seekers were dispersed on a no-choice basis and have had no agency over where they would live in Glasgow. ASRs who were part of the dispersal scheme were predominantly housed in socially deprived areas on the outskirts of Glasgow. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) measure indicated GCC as a council with many deprived areas: 44% of neighbourhoods in Glasgow have been identified as deprived, specifically, Carntyne West and Haghill, North Barlanark and Easterhouse South in Glasgow are within the ten most deprived areas (SIMD, 2020). Figure 1 shows the most deprived neighbourhoods in Glasgow, such as Springburn, Govan, Castlemilk, Maryhill, Gorbals and Pollock. People living in those areas in Glasgow have fewer resources and have fewer opportunities in terms of employment, income, health, and housing.

[6] Refused asylum seekers who have had their asylum applications rejected but fulfil the requirements of section 4 of the IAA 1999.

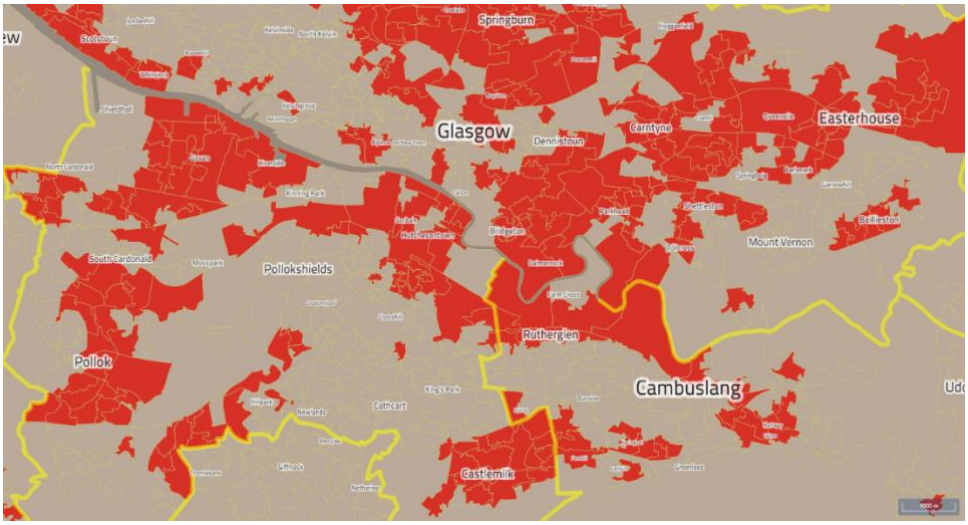

***Figure 1**: Deprived areas in Glasgow (Source: SIMD, 2020)*

Most of the participants in this research are from areas such as Easterhouse, Govan, Maryhill, Castlemilk, Springburn and Pollockshields East. These are less popular areas on the outskirts of Glasgow with high unemployment, low-income households and limited community facilities (Sim and Bowes, 2007; Mulvey, 2009). According to Glasgow Centre for Population Health (2020), Easterhouse in the north-east of Glasgow has high levels of deprivation where 32.5% of the local population claim unemployment benefits. In Springburn 31.5% of people also claim employment and support allowance. Furthermore, in the east of Glasgow, significant neighbourhoods such as Govan, Castlemilk, Pollockshields East, Ibrox and Kingston a high proportion of people depend on benefits (for example, unemployment benefits). Of note is that there is a larger proportion of ethnic minorities living in these areas: 53% of the population are ethnic minorities in Pollockshields East. The deprivation levels in these areas are also linked to a range of other social problems such as health issues (Walsh, 2019). Figure 2 shows the levels of income deprivation in Glasgow neighbourhoods.

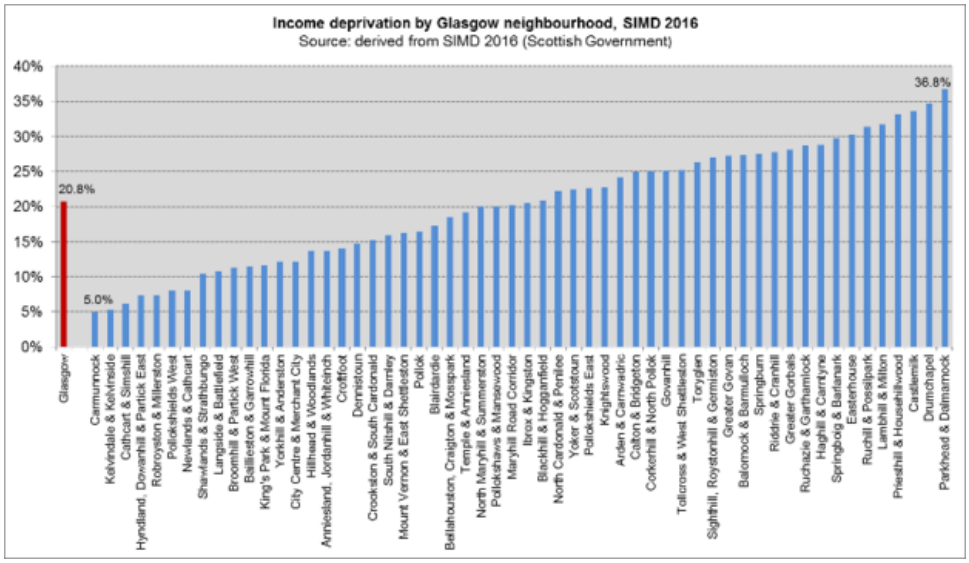

***Figure 2**: Income deprivation by Glasgow neighbourhood*

At the same time, increasing numbers of ASRs and levels of deprivation have shaped public attitudes towards them in Glasgow. A no-choice dispersal means asylum seekers are typically housed in deprived areas with poverty, generalised violence and casual racism (O'Nions, 2010). Although there is a greater tolerance and welcoming attitude for ASRs in Scotland than in other parts of the UK, Lewis (2006) indicates there is a considerable difference in Glasgow. In Lewis's (2006) study, most of the participants expressed a hostile attitude towards asylum seekers in Glasgow due to the concerns about social and demographic change, and impacts on the economy and employment opportunities. Young people in Glasgow considered asylum seekers as a threat to their jobs and feared negative impacts on public services, particularly housing (Lewis, 2006). Asylum seekers have also been blamed for social problems and considered as receiving preferential treatment. O'Nions (2010) highlights that a general culture of negative attitude and violence has been directed towards those who are perceived to be outsiders due to poverty, deprivation and social exclusion. A participant of Trevena (2018: 18) stated:

> What has been happening in England after the EU referendum has been appalling and this is Scotland's chance to promote itself as a more welcoming country. Providing that this is really the case. Reality has to follow. Govanhill, Maryhill [which are areas of high ethnic diversity in Glasgow] may be similar to down south. Let's not kid ourselves that Scotland is that different.

This view highlights issues around the political climate and public attitude towards migrants in Glasgow. While Scotland has a generally welcoming attitude towards migrants, there are issues of racism and xenophobia in socially deprived areas (Trevena, 2018) such as Govan and Maryhill. My research found that ASRs experience similar attitudes, which affected their early adaptation and access to social protection.

2.3.1. Local initiatives for integration in Glasgow

There is an increased demand for community cohesion, integration and specific service provision for ASRs in Glasgow. While the Sottish integration strategies play a significant role in facilitating service provision and integration of ASRs (Scottish Government, 2018), there have been local initiatives in Glasgow to promote and facilitate ASRs' integration and access to services. The Scottish Government has given importance to the role of TSOs for facilitating and promoting ASRs' integration locally in Glasgow. Wren (2007) highlights that 'at the inception of dispersal in Glasgow, there were no formalised structures for the participation of the voluntary sector in service provision or community development' (Wren, 2007: 396). However, the Scottish Government's subsequent integration approaches have promoted the third sector's role in supporting ASRs. The third sector is providing extensive support by sharing relevant information, providing advice/consultations, advocating for adequate state support, providing additional support to obtain services, and so on. Churches and other religious entities play a role in providing pastoral support and charity such as hot meals, food vouchers and community events. TSOs working for asylum seekers are key players that promote 'social cohesion in communities where they have been dispersed' (Wren, 2007: 396).

Integration networks are key local approaches to assist ASRs in Glasgow. These integration networks are a group of local agencies, community groups and volunteers who deliver services to ASRs in Glasgow. Between 2000 and 2002, 10 integration networks were established 'in response to the need to facilitate coherent involvement of local voluntary and community organisations on a city-wide scale' (Wren 2004: 24). These networks provided services,

such as information and advice, English classes, drop-in services, activities for children and adults, cultural programmes, and emotional and practical support (Scottish Refugee Council, 2020).

However, services provided by each network differ based on the needs of ASRs within the local areas. For instance, South East Integration Network (SEIN) currently plays a coordinating role for local organisations in the south-east of Glasgow while the Maryhill integration network (MIN) provides direct services to ASRs. Integration networks' drop-in sessions have often been the primary point of contact for ASRs to learn about available services, and other groups and organisations. Integration networks also organise activities, such as gardening clubs, men's or women's groups, sports groups, homework groups and so on. The introduction of integration networks plays a crucial role in promoting the integration of ASRs in Glasgow (See Appendix A7 for information about integration networks activities).

Since the dispersal of asylum seekers, various statutory organisations and TSOs have strongly committed to the integration of ASRs in Glasgow. Several multi-agency networks have been established to promote services and support for ASRs. HIS was a significant project implemented to bring together various stakeholders including the third sector and education sectors to assist refugees in the 12 months following receipt of refugee status (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016). It was a partnership between SRC, Bridges Programmes, BRC, Glasgow Clyde College and the Workers' Educational Association Scotland to meet the needs of newly recognised refugees in Glasgow. Through this particular service, refugees are offered different kinds of assistance, such as finding accommodation, applying for welfare benefits and accessing the labour market (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017).

In the period of 2014–2015, the Refugee Peer Education for Health and Wellbeing project trained several ASRs to act as peer health educators by the NHSGGC North East Sector Health Improvement Team in collaboration with SRC (Strang, 2015). This project particularly focused on improving ASRs' access to health services, encouraging healthier lifestyles, empowering individuals and communities to identify and respond effectively to their own health and wellbeing challenges. Another locally successful third sector and

state collaboration was the establishment of the Bridges Programme in 2002, funded by the Scottish Government, GCC and The National Lottery Community Fund. This programme connects employers and migrants including ASRs to introduce them to the labour market. A key outcome of this project is the social, educational and economic integration of ASRs and other migrants living in Glasgow (Bridges Programmes, 2020).

Nevertheless, the extensive role of TSOs in assisting ASRs in Glasgow highlights the burden placed on them by the state, 'where responsibility has fallen on voluntary and community organisations to fill gaps in statutory service provision' (Wren, 2007: 391). Although the literature is not specifically from a Scottish or Glaswegian context, Mayblin and James (2019) report a similar finding to Wren (2007). In their study, they note that the UK government's policy restrictions and lack of support are creating a gap in fulfilling ASRs' needs that hinders their integration and settlement. TSOs thus attempt to fill the gaps within their capacity.

Nevertheless, the temporary nature of support from the third sector has also been identified as a barrier to long-term integration of ASRs because of their short-term outcomes. Mayblin and James (2019) highlight that there is a lack of investigation on the scale of third sector responses to the needs of ASRs. In the Scottish context, it could be observed that there is limited literature on the third sector's role in supporting ASRs in Glasgow, and therefore, an examination of informed knowledge on how TSOs are filling the gaps in ASRs' support is much needed.

2.4. Conclusion

The contextual background highlights that the Westminster Government focuses more on reducing net migration, by creating a hostile environment, increasing barriers and restricting entitlements of asylum seekers. The existing system shows a lack of political will and governmental support to enhance and improve integration services for asylum seekers (Phillimore, 2017). However, the Scottish Government is effectively dealing with the negative impacts of this reserved policy matter (dispersal impacts) within their devolved powers. In Scotland, Glasgow is the only city to accept asylum

seekers. Even though the Scottish Government and GCC are continuing to welcome asylum seekers, they have been housed in highly deprived areas of Glasgow where there is a lack of resources and other social problems.

Nevertheless, recognising the importance of integrating newcomers, GCC and several TSOs have been significantly involved in the process of assisting migrants. In particular, integration networks have been given more importance as spaces for integration and inclusion. Overall, the contextual background demonstrated the different approaches in the UK and Scottish policy-making, and a wealth of programmes and initiatives at the city level, which have implications for ASRs' experiences in Glasgow.

3. Concepts

There are three concepts especially pertinent to this thesis: social protection; vulnerability; integration. This chapter outlines these key concepts and the theories relevant to them in three parts. Section 3.1 sets out the conceptual field of social protection for this research. While focusing on separate forms of social protection, this section highlights social protection assemblages as a significant lens in this study. Within Section 3.2, the potential application of the concept of vulnerabilities in the context of migration will be analysed. Section 3.3 explores integration as a conceptual framework to examine ASRs' experiences of social protection and integration in Glasgow. These three concepts are complex and interrelated, but significant for understanding ASRs' experiences.

3.1. Social protection

In recent years, the subject of social protection for migrants has received increasing attention from scholars (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018; Bilecen, 2019; Vathi, Duci and Dhembo, 2019). There is no specific universally accepted definition for social protection, but different perspectives have been developed that are based on factors such as the types of services, who provides them and who the beneficiaries are. The World Bank (2001) defines social protection as actions taken by the state to address the vulnerability of deprived populations such as social assistance (cash transfers), benefits and support for the working population (maternity, disability, work injury and unemployment benefits) and a pension for the elderly. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) focuses on social protection in terms of basic security to ensure universal access to essential healthcare and income security (ILO, 2012). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) discusses social protection within the context of state-provided social benefits (social assistance and social insurance) and private social benefits (mandatory and voluntary social expenditure) to enhance the capacity of poor and vulnerable people (OECD, 2007). OECD considers old age (pensions), incapacity-related benefits (care

services and disability benefits), health, family (child allowances and childcare support), active labour market policies, unemployment benefits, housing, cash benefits to low-income households and other social services as significant social protection actions. Social protection is therefore a 'measure of the extent to which countries assume responsibility for supporting the standard of living of disadvantaged or *vulnerable*[7] groups' (OECD, 2019: online).

From the UK perspective, the Department for International Development (DFID) conceptualises social protection in line with the OECD and ILO frameworks of social assistance, social insurance and minimum labour standards (Arnold, Conway and Greenslade, 2011). Social assistance has been provided through cash transfers, in-kind transfers and free or subsidised access to goods and services so as to reduce vulnerability and poverty among individuals and households. Social insurance is seen as a form of protection against shock or life-cycle events, such as injury, illness, unemployment, old age and death. There is also emphasis given to establishing and enforcing minimum standards for employment conditions.

At the same time, for social protection and migration scholars, the foundation of social protection is perceived and positioned to *address individuals' vulnerabilities* by targeted criteria or means-tested assistance delivered by multiple actors via formal and informal systems. Devereux (2002) conceptualises social protection based on the safety net perspective that deals with the provision of non-contributory social assistance programmes implemented for human capital development. Sabates-Wheeler and Waite (2003: 5) state that 'social protection is an agenda primarily for reducing vulnerability and managing the risk of low-income individuals, households and communities with regard to basic consumption and social services'. Social protection has been conceptualised in terms of broad categories of social welfare, such as education, health subsidies and employment prospects (Norton, Conway and Foster, 2001; Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). Sabates-Wheeler and MacAuslan (2008) highlight the perspective of social protection as being a set of social welfare measures to protect vulnerable

[7] Italics added

individuals through a range of public, private, formal and informal policies and practices put in place for ensuring the wellbeing of individuals, households and communities. Moreover, social protection is also positioned in terms of tangible and intangible resources used to shield against social risks that affect an individual (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004; Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011; Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015).

Despite the different perspectives for conceptualising social protection, three dimensions of social protection are evident: *addressing vulnerability and risk*, *addressing deprivation*, and *providing support through social and public sectors* (Sabates-Wheeler and Waite, 2003; Shepherd, Marcus and Barrientos, 2004; Avato, Koettl and Sabates-Wheeler, 2010). These dimensions refer to social protection as an action for managing risk and vulnerabilities in one or more sectors (economic, physical and social), and focusing on enhancing the social status and rights of vulnerable and marginalised people (Holzmann and Jørgensen, 2001; Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2008). For the purpose of this research, I adopt a general concept of social protection, as being 'all interventions from public, private and voluntary organisations and informal networks to support communities, households and individuals in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome risk and vulnerabilities' (Shepherd, Marcus and Barrientos, 2004: 8).

3.1.1. Dimensions of social protection

Social protection involves both formal and informal dimensions. Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman (2011) identified four components of social protection: access to formal social protection, portability, labour market conditions and access to informal networks of support. Within these dimensions, formal and informal social protection has been recognised as a crucial and distinct realm of social protection (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). In the context of ASRs, in one regard, they primarily depend on formal social protection, especially when considering their vulnerabilities and experiences of deprivation in a new country (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). In another regard, informal social protection plays a crucial role when formal support either fails or simply does not exist in the host countries (Faist et al., 2015).

Formal social protection plays a significant role in determining ASRs' level of vulnerability as newcomers, protecting individuals against risks, and providing support to ensure livelihood security. Formal support is provided by the state and TSOs, yet largely involves publicly funded programmes regulated by policies and legislation, such as social security benefits, short-term benefits, healthcare, education and social housing (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011). The state generally dominates in the realm of the provision of formal social protection. In the state provision, specific rules, regulations and entitlements determine access to formal services (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015); essentially 'the host country regulates what benefits migrants have access to and under what conditions' (Avato, Koettl and Sabates-Wheeler, 2010: 457). Scholars have highlighted that negative interactions between the welfare state and irregular migration triggered actions against irregular migrants indicating the policies of control and exclusion (Phillimore and Goodson, 2006; Kidd, 2017; O'Reilly, 2018).

The state's portrayal of ASRs as undeserving and a drain on welfare support influenced the formal social protection for them in the UK (Sainsbury, 2006; McDonald and Billings, 2007; Guentner et al., 2016). The UK government has imposed welfare restrictions, reduced entitlement and support, increased deportation and so on. Against the increasing numbers of irregular migrants, UK's immigration policy has been described as a policy of deterrence, which is designed to make applying for asylum difficult, create a hostile environment and make life for migrants unpleasant. While refugees are treated similarly to citizens and are entitled to mainstream social provision, asylum seekers have minimal rights to social protection. Although there are existing formal social protection mechanisms in place (such as healthcare, education, housing and benefits), asylum seekers face a lack of access to welfare resources in host countries (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). Asylum seekers, even as legal residents in the UK, cannot claim social benefits or public funds. The role of the state in shaping ASRs' access to and provision of formal support has been discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.

In the realm of formal social protection, although international organisations and private market providers fall within the formal category of providers, the

state, as a powerful institution, has undermined other forms of social protection. Nevertheless, recent research suggests that inadequate levels of formal support push them towards the TSOs, such as charities and NGOs (Mayblin and James, 2019). The third sector is a heterogeneous, multifaceted and complex 'space of organisational activity located between the state, market and private familial spheres, comprising a diversity of organisational types including charities, social enterprises, faith, community, and grassroots' (Rees and Mullins, 2016:15). TSOs vary according to their structure, size, types of activities they offer and type of service users. However, in the formal dimensions, the state is distinctly classified as a formal social protection provider, while the third sector is overlooked.

In the existing literature, there are ongoing debates and discussions about who is responsible to provide support for ASRs (Kendall and Knapp, 2000; Mayblin and James, 2019). TSOs are a significant part of a much larger picture of formal organisations supporting ASRs. There has often been an assumption from the state that the third sector would fill the gaps left by the state authorities (Dwyer and Brown, 2005). Wren (2007: 391) states that the presence of TSOs presents a significant disadvantage in assisting ASRs because 'responsibility has fallen on voluntary and community organisations to fill gaps in statutory service provision'. However, Mayblin and James (2019) highlighted that there is a lack of investigation into the scale of third-sector responses to the needs of ASRs.

Informal social protection refers to multiple informal institutions and networks that migrants use to manage their vulnerabilities and risks (Avato, Koettl and Sabates-Wheeler, 2010). Informal social protection is mainly provided by social networks developed on collective norms, such as solidarity, reciprocity, or obligations (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). Migrants build their social networks with a combination of individuals and organisations, based on different needs and relationships, such as common interest, economic exchange, information sharing, friendship and social activities (Poros, 2011; Amelina et al., 2012). Informal networks for ASRs are often their family,

friends and social networks in the host country (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018).

Informal social protection is necessary for migrants because of decreasing welfare provision for them (Faist, 2013; Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). On the one hand, for ASRs, access to formal social protection might not be possible, while on the other hand, restrictions on their social rights can hinder their access to formal social protection (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). In particular, access to formal social protection in the new host country is often restricted due to political decisions, and access can be delayed until some months or years after arrival (Avato, Koettl and Sabates-Wheeler, 2010). Sabates-Wheeler (2019) stated that ASRs are unable to take advantage of available services due to barriers in access to social protection. Those who could not access formal social protection are thus dependent on their informal and personal networks (Sabates-Wheeler and Koettl, 2010; Bilecen and Sienkiewicz, 2015; Paul, 2017). In the UK, asylum seekers have often received low levels of support, resulting in destitution and poor standards of living, and refugees with limited opportunities have struggled to survive (Phillimore, 2017; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017; Mayblin and James, 2019). Informal social protection, therefore, plays a crucial gap-filling role, and complements formal social protection, while depending on the state and third sector (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). Nevertheless, formal social protection has been given more attention in the current literature, while informal social protection is largely overlooked.

While formal and informal support are considered as distinct dimensions of social protection (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015), there are suggestions for *semi-formal social protection* as another dimension. Semi-formal social protection is considered an intermediate category in relation to formal and informal social protection, (Devereux and Getu, 2013) which is ‘not publicly provided but the bodies that provide it do “operate as institutions with accountability mechanism”’ (Teshome, 2013: 64). Semi-formal social protection is mainly delivered by NGOs, faith-based organisations and

community-based organisations using member contributions (Devereux and Getu, 2013).

Existing social protection literature indicates that not much attention has been given to semi-formal social protection elements (Devereux and Getu, 2013), especially in the context of migration (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018). The application of semi-formal social protection is discussed in the Global South literature, where developing countries address vulnerabilities, absence and inadequacy of formal protection, and the weakened family support system through this dimension (Devereux, 2015a, 2015b). In a study about Arsii (the major Oromo groups in Ethiopia) and their custom-based institutions and values of solidarity and reciprocity, Hebo (2013) indicates that the rise of semi-formal social protection occurred due to a relative decline in informal social protection and the challenges faced by traditional systems and networks in assisting different groups in different contexts. Devereux (2015a) highlights that though informal support plays an important social protection role, it has limited capacity and coverage to address key issues, and therefore, semi-formal social protection becomes significant.

However, recognition towards, and assessment of, the role of the semi-formal dimension has been limited in high-income countries. There is also a variation in the degree of the third-sector's involvement in formal social protection. For example, not all TSOs provide formal support that is partially funded by the UK or Scottish governments. Even though charities and NGOs are registered under the charity commission, some of their actions are funded and supported by the local people through voluntary and individual contribution. All TSOs cannot be generalised as being formal social protection providers because they do not always receive state funding to support ASRs; in the UK, they do not provide formal social protection mechanisms such as housing, healthcare, employment, education, or social benefits. Indeed, some of these organisations operate more in the realm of semi-formal protection. Although registered organisations also get involved, such provisions are offered in a 'sporadic and non-systematised manner' (Devereux, 2015a: 89). There are organisations that provide only charitable and voluntary non-formal social protection for ASRs. Therefore, understanding social protection for ASRs only

from the perspectives of formal and informal mechanisms limits the ability to explore semi-formal social protection as a mechanism, which became evident during my field research.

To reiterate, formal and informal social protection each have different dimensions and are given significant importance due to their distinct features. Hebo (2013) acknowledges the fact that although semi-formal social protection functions between formal and informal mechanisms, it has been often referred to as an informal mechanism. Semi-formal social protection, though sharing features of formal and informal elements and holding an intermediary space, exists in a grey area positioned between formal and informal social protection. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, semi-formal social protection is considered as the third, grey, category of social protection.

3.1.2. Social protection assemblages

In this thesis, the concept of assemblages has been used for challenging traditional understandings of forms of social protection as separate. Formal and informal forms of support have been acknowledged as significant and distinct dimensions of social protection. These dimensions present a dichotomous and hierarchical positioning of social protection where formal state support is privileged against informal support (Vathi, Duci and Dhembo, 2019). While they produce a dichotomy, scholars highlight a relative connection and interdependency of formal and informal social protection dimensions which is called assemblages (Faist, 2013; Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). Assemblages denotes the condition ‘whereby social actors constantly negotiate and combine the use of formal and informal provisions’ (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018: 2130), which influences ‘the distribution of life chances’ (Faist and Bilecen, 2015: 282). Scholars have reiterated that access to social protection is context- and case-specific, and therefore, ‘both formality and informality are continuous rather than dichotomous areas’ (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). Amelina and Bause (2020: 420) note that assemblages can be regarded as ‘societal configurations that temporarily bring together and relationally link multiple heterogenous elements’. Hence,

assemblages occur, depending on migrants' rights, availability of provisions, specific situations and individual needs (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015).

A growing body of literature indicates the focus on combinations of formal and informal protection, especially with regard to migrants (for example, Amelina et al., 2012, Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015, Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018). Primarily, state welfare policies play a significant role in enabling and obstructing migrants' access to social protection (Faist and Bilecen, 2015). In the context of forced migrants in the UK, refugees have full access and are entitled to formal social protection while asylum seekers have limited protective resources in the UK. Challenges in gaining access to formal social protection have led them to depend more on informal elements (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). While refugees become more dependent on formal mechanisms, Poros (2011: online) states that the 'ability to find a job and accommodation, [and] access healthcare can all be directly affected by or even dependent upon the migrant's social networks'. Therefore, it could be argued that access to formal social protection is broadly shaped by individuals' interpersonal ties (Amelina et al., 2012).

Employing informal social protection strategies has been a way to react to the formal social protection constraints and to navigate through the system (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011; Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015; Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2017, 2018). While informal social protection plays a role in areas where formal social protection creates constraints, are weak or non-existent, Faist et al. (2015) highlight that formal support could extend the practice of informal social protection. For example, permanent social housing could lead to refugees building better social connections in their locality, which shows the blurred boundaries between the formal and informal form of social protection. Bilecen and Barglowski (2015) argue that these different forms of social protection should be addressed simultaneously as there is no clear-cut dividing line between formal and informal social protection for international migrants.

Irregular migrants – asylum seekers in particular – are not just passive recipients of social protection but are active in finding ways to achieve their

social protection. Referring to documented migrants including ASRs, Williams (2006: 866) claims that they are 'active in finding help appropriate to their own priorities and objectives' within a system where they have been systematically excluded from accessing welfare support. From a transnational context, Serra Mingot and Mazzucato (2018) identified how refugees and other documented migrants devised tactics combining formal and informal forms to achieve their and their significant others' (family members or spouse) social protection. Furthermore, undocumented migrants also use assemblages as counterstrategies to act against the political constraints and actions aiming to prevent irregular migrants and hindering them progressing in their life (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018). Assemblages of social protection is therefore an important mechanism for ASRs in the UK. As people who are systematically controlled and discriminated against by hostile polices, ASRs act to regain control of some aspects of their lives. Investigating ASRs' social protection from either a formal or informal perspective poses a significant challenge because while formal social protection focuses on formal support that can be accessed primarily depending on the eligibility criteria, migrants seek support from social networks in their host countries to achieve social protection (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018).

The assemblages allow individuals to access social protection and they change according to the availability of resources at a particular moment of life course (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). Migrants constantly negotiate and combine the use of formal, informal and semi-formal mechanisms to access social protection. In other words, assemblages are a migrant's strategy – useful for optimising their ability to make use of formal, semi-formal and informal resources and the outcomes for them as they access services. However, there is a research gap when it comes to migrants and more particularly ASRs' strategies and, more broadly, the practicalities of social protection assemblages in the context of migration (Vathi, Duci and Dhembo, 2019). Indeed, it is evident from this thesis that different dimensions of social protection are interdependent and this interdependence affects ASRs' access to and experiences of social protection. In other words, assemblages can be viewed as migrants' means and practices of achieving social protection as

being linked to dissimilar elements, which recognises the layers of social protection such as formal, informal and semi-formal (Amelina and Bause, 2020). Therefore, ASRs' social protection experiences can be understood by investigating the exchange of resources in various forms of social protection (Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018).

It can be argued that one of the main issues in current provision of social protection for ASRs is that most services in host countries are controlled and restricted by the state, which focuses on creating a hostile environment for migrants in the UK. The social protection needs, however, go beyond formal social protection and the state because ASRs are inadequately provided for and this lack of formal support means that they require additional support from other forms of social protection. To understand social protection experiences of ASRs, there is a need to look at the assemblages of social protection: an investigation beyond either formal, informal or semi-formal social protection. A lens of assemblages of social protection, therefore, can be applied to investigate and determine how ASRs achieve access to various forms of social protection and how this shapes their social protection needs. Social protection assemblages as a concept offers unique findings especially in the context of ASRs in a host country since there only a few studies that have focused on combinations of formal and informal social protection in a transnational context.

3.1.3. The rationale for social protection

For the purpose of this research, social protection has been chosen as a key concept because individuals fleeing persecution and seeking sanctuary are prone to social risks and different forms of vulnerabilities. ASRs face challenges and inequalities in accessing various resources in a host country, which limits their ability to cater to their own needs and those of their dependents. The unequal access to resources produces negative consequences and places ASRs in a vulnerable position. Social protection is therefore an important instrument for dealing with migrants' vulnerabilities and risks and can play a key role in overcoming the vulnerabilities and obstacles that ASRs experience (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019).

According to the available literature, the conceptual discussions of social protection have not given much attention to ASRs (see, for example, Sabates-Wheeler and Koettl, 2010, Faist et al., 2015). Most of the Global North studies focus on labour migration while the Global South studies talk of social protection in terms of human development. Though there are studies on the topic of social protection for irregular migrants, attention to ASRs within the realm of social protection has been limited (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). Social protection as a concept therefore allows for analysis of mutual contingencies of formal, informal and semi-formal mechanisms of securing social protection for ASRs in host countries.

In various contexts and at various times, social protection addresses distinct needs of vulnerable people through different components, yet it is clear that a single mechanism cannot address all social protection needs, particularly those of forced migrants. As Sabates-Wheeler (2019: 16) states, 'where access barriers are so high that they are unable to take advantage of provision even where it is available', ASRs, as newcomers to society, are in a much more vulnerable position than other residents because they are estranged from their countries of origin and home communities. They are dependent upon formal social protection mechanisms to provide them with necessary support (Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015). Norton (2002) indicated that formal social protection services complements the informal support required by newcomers that is necessary for their survival. However, access to formal social protection in the new host country is often restricted due to political decisions and access can be delayed until some months or years after arrival (Avato, Koettl and Sabates-Wheeler, 2010). Asylum seekers thus depend on informal social protection mechanisms. However, a lack of informal support from family and friends leads to limited or no access to the necessary informal social protection mechanisms. While a dichotomous position of formal and informal dimensions has been observed, Bilecen and Barglowski (2015) highlight the complementary role that informal social protection plays. In this research, additional evidence on formal and informal social protection and links between the two dimensions will be provided.

Meanwhile, the literature suggests that semi-formal elements also have the capacity to fill the gaps between the formal and informal mechanisms. This particular dilemma highlights the necessity of formal social protection while increasing the demands to depend on informal and semi-formal mechanisms; research on diverse forms of formal, informal and semi-formal mechanisms could facilitate the examination of the gaps and obstacles in overall access to social protection. It would also provide the basis to examine inadequacies in traditional formal and informal systems and investigate active informal and semi-formal social protection practices. It would allow for the interrogation of strategies ASRs use to access three forms of social protection: formal, informal, or semi-formal. Finally, social protection research provides evidence to enable and strengthen relevant institutions and policies for the provision of social protection.

3.2. Vulnerability

The conceptual definitions of vulnerability vary across disciplines and in certain circumstances they could be quite ambiguous. In general, definitions of vulnerability focus on 'hazards, responses and outcomes' (Busetta et al., 2019), actors, types of capability deficit, key functions, the level of risk addressed and attention to rights (Peroni and Timmer, 2013; Gilson, 2016). Vulnerability has been further approached in terms of a society's or individuals' exposure to elements of risk, such as geographic vulnerability (physical conditions) and social vulnerability (human conditions) (Black, 1994; Brown, 2012). Vulnerability is therefore a 'multidimensional concept and corresponds to the complexity of the phenomenon it is defined against' (Barrientos and Hulme, 2008: 65) and arises from different sources.

The focus towards the human conditions, such as displacement and poverty, resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors led to the emergence of multi-dimensional conceptualisation of vulnerability. In particular, migrants face a range of vulnerabilities due to a limited capacity for social protection. They have a higher risk due to their movements, specific legal statuses, demographic characteristics, socio-economic conditions and the local context (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). For instance, as discussed in the

Chapter 2, asylum seekers hosted in the UK become vulnerable due to legal restrictions in accessing mainstream services. There should be a focus on the problems or issues created by the interactions between the physical, social, economic and political characteristics (Walters and Gaillard, 2014), and including migrants, people and institutions in a particular environment (Collins, 2008; Martin, 2015). While there are increasing numbers of studies applying vulnerability to understand migrants' situations (Busetta et al., 2019; Kofman, 2019; Sabates-Wheeler, 2019), the concept of vulnerability is limited in the context of ASRs.

Sabates-Wheeler and Waite (2003) explore vulnerability in terms of *spatial, socio-cultural* and *socio-political determinants*. Spatial determinants have been seen as a major cause of vulnerabilities migrants faced in transit and destination countries. It also causes specific vulnerabilities due to the limited support and scarce resources in the relocated areas (for example, deprived dispersal areas in the UK). The spatial vulnerabilities include remoteness from point of help, unfamiliar settlement areas, lack of knowledge of rights and access to services, language issues and so on. The socio-political determinant explains the institutional challenges faced by the migrants, such as exploitation, lack of representation, restrictive legislation, lack of access to rights, discrimination, denied participation and lack of access to social assistance. In particular, the housing areas and dispersed locations physically separate ASRs from their access to mainstream society and co-ethnic support (Robinson, Andersson and Musterd, 2003; Stewart, 2005). Asylum seekers have been further prevented from accessing certain mainstream services (ineligible to access) and provided with inadequate support, which constitutes discrimination. In addition, the socio-cultural constraints affect migrants' access to social welfare and other services through discrimination in access, discrimination in provision (based on legal status, ethnicity, language and gender) and the requirement to show additional eligibility requirements, additional scrutiny of the required documents and xenophobia (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). Although this study is not attending in detail to gender-related concerns, Sabates-Wheeler (2019) highlights gender because an individual's characteristics might influence migrants' vulnerabilities. Gender played a role

in access to welfare services, particularly for women who were given the responsibilities of running the household and caretaking while men primarily accessed welfare services (Sainsbury, 1999).

Although multiple vulnerabilities have been identified within one dimension, each dimension often contributes to other vulnerabilities in other dimensions. A migrant's legal status and cultural differences contributes to socio-cultural and socio-political vulnerabilities and they lead to social exclusion in the destination countries. Dislocation from their origin countries and restrictions to access resources in host countries creates social and economic vulnerabilities among migrants. An analysis of vulnerabilities based on the determinants of vulnerability will thus enable a 'structural, long-term perspective rather than just a remedial perspective' (Sabates-Wheeler and Waite, 2003: 15). Sabates-Wheeler and Waite's framework has not been applied in the existing literature on forced migration, and therefore identifying the vulnerabilities of migrants based on their spatial, socio-political and socio-cultural determinants could reflect a holistic understanding of ASRs' vulnerable situation. It would also be a significant addition to the existing knowledge of forced migrants and vulnerabilities.

While Sabates-Wheeler and Waite (2003) focus on spatial, socio-cultural and socio-political determinants, Stewart (2005) emphasises the importance of considering *time and space relations* to understand vulnerabilities of asylum seekers. In the context of the protracted asylum process, asylum seekers' vulnerability derives from their temporal or interstitial position in the nation state. Stewart (2005: 501) states that asylum seekers' 'liminality is not only defined by their temporary immigration status but is also indicative of daily lived experiences that are "outside the law"'. In this view, time creates vulnerability in two significant ways: the manifestation of governmental power and the existence of a protracted state of liminality, which could also be situated within the socio-political determinants of vulnerability. The governmental power has been imposed on asylum seekers by granting temporary status and forming the label of 'asylum seekers' that negatively shape their everyday lives. Furthermore, in a temporal context, asylum seekers are denied access to their rights and live in a limbo that in turn keeps

them in a permanent state of liminality. As widely accepted in the migration literature, asylum seekers' interstitial position within a nation state has been a major contributor to their vulnerable situation. The temporary status of asylum seekers and their negative lived experiences have been identified as indicators of vulnerabilities, which also links to powerlessness and entitlement problems (dilemmas or access and eligibility) (Watts and Bohle, 1993; Stewart, 2005); hence an analysis of ASRs' vulnerabilities should focus on time–space relations and daily lives.

Furthermore, Luna (2009) argues that the same population will have different vulnerabilities based on the social and political contexts (Luna, 2009). For instance, an asylum seeker or refugee living in Scotland will have different layers of vulnerability to the one in England. Though they belong to the same group, the environment they are living in will have different impacts on their vulnerability. Thus, the conceptualisation of vulnerabilities should not rely on generalised labelling of individuals as ASRs: 'not everybody is alike' (Luna, 2009: 123). Even though their position as asylum seekers or refugees requires a multi-dimensional assessment of individuals and their environment, the determination of layers of vulnerability may vary in individuals and the way they perceive others and their environment. For example, the decision to focus on employment vulnerability may lead to ignoring other vulnerabilities, such as education and health.

Similarly, McLaughlin and Dietz (2008) consider *human agency* as one of the key factors in shaping the direction of vulnerability discourses. The human agency determines vulnerability based on the fact that individuals are not just passive and their actions independent. Their understanding of vulnerability depends on their priorities, and the way issues have been framed by the human actors will determine vulnerability and their experiences. McLaughlin and Dietz (2008: 106) state that 'understanding how they ''frame'' issues such as well-being and deprivation are crucial to understanding and mitigating vulnerability'. The conceptualisation of vulnerability here acknowledges the complexity of vulnerability by basing the considerations of the experiences of people that differ on several social constructions such as race, religion and

other social groupings. This is pertinent to this research as importance has been given to the voices of ASRs.

Vulnerability is a relative term, and therefore, in a migrant's contemporary situation, it cannot be discussed without relating to the issue of wellbeing. For instance, Vatsa (2004: 10) states, 'an individual, a household, or a community can be considered vulnerable when there is a probability that they will experience a level of wellbeing that is below a socially accepted threshold'. As stated above, ASRs have a lack of support, and spatial, socio-cultural and socio-political vulnerabilities have an impact on the quality of their life and wellbeing. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 2, the hostile asylum policies in the UK, which provide low levels of assistance, rarely support the efforts of asylum seekers to feel included, and thus negatively affect their wellbeing.

Several recent studies in Scotland report that ASRs often face challenges while aspiring to have a better life and the systematic barriers often hinder their aspirations and efforts (Strang and Quinn, 2014, 2019; Kearns and Whitley, 2015). Strang and Quinn (2014) note that ASRs must overcome the culture shock in a new country, while facing insecurity, instability and destitution due to the asylum process. In addition, a lack of inactivity harmed their wellbeing; ASRs are inactive in terms of employment and worry about their future. Strang and Quinn (2019) further point out that low levels of social networks with family, friends or local services would affect an isolated refugee's wellbeing. Refugees in such a position are prone to isolate themselves and avoid engaging with others and services in the community. Furthermore, Kearns et al. (2017) highlight a negative correlation between time and affects. Time spent on waiting for a decision decreased wellbeing among asylum seekers while refugees' wellbeing also declined (see also Vathi and King, 2013). For instance, the uncertainty created through the introduction of more hostile policies negatively affected ASRs' wellbeing, and refugees struggled to maintain a positive life due to the temporary nature of their leave to remain.

In Scotland, there is a significant commitment to promoting 'inclusion and equality' in terms of ASRs' health and wellbeing (Strang, 2015: 5). A clear focus has been given to wellbeing in terms of providing adequate knowledge

and skills to understand their wellbeing, prepare them to effectively use healthcare and other public services and equip ASRs to look after themselves in the best way they can (Scottish Government, 2018). While the majority of research in Glasgow focused on integration, there are a few studies specifically focused on the wellbeing of ASRs in Glasgow (Strang and Quinn, 2014).

The existing literature suggests different experiences of material and relational dimensions of wellbeing. Although the academic literature discusses the drawbacks of the mainstream system and the provisions to indicate the failure of wellbeing, the material dimensions cannot be solely designated to understand the aspirations, capacities and efforts of ASRs. However, there is a lack of focus on the subjective wellbeing of ASRs. Subjective wellbeing has been considered a reliable measure to understand an individual's wellbeing, as it provides significant insights into their perceptions and experiences. In other words, a state of wellbeing cannot be decided by the degree of services provided to ASRs by the state agencies and the third sector. Thus, wellbeing has to focus on the subjective feelings of individual ASRs. While this study is not solely focusing on vulnerability and wellbeing, it offers ample evidence on the way early stages of adaptation, experiences with social protection and experiences of social inclusion/exclusion affect ASRs' welfare and wellbeing.

Drawing upon the vulnerability literature and qualitative narratives, this research adds to the substantive knowledge of ASRs' vulnerability by including their every- day experiences and responses to it. The literature around vulnerability suggests there are various types and causes, such as problems of entitlement and powerlessness, and spatial, personal, and political issues. These different approaches recognise that vulnerability should be studied beyond spatial and political exclusions. Luna (2009) explains that individuals have different vulnerabilities within the same social and political contexts in a society or a country. Generalising individuals (ASRs) based on their legality (e.g. irregular migrants) and the different stages of the migration process (in transit and destination) might hamper the analyses of individual vulnerabilities in specific contexts. Most importantly the role of human agency has to be acknowledged, because it plays a crucial role in determining

vulnerability (McLaughlin and Dietz, 2008). Therefore, this research uses ASRs' stories to understand what vulnerability means for them and explore their experiences, how they address vulnerability using the available social protection and how vulnerability should be addressed in ideal circumstances.

3.3.Integration

Integration is a complex and highly contested concept (Dwyer, 2009; Phillimore, 2011; Castles et al. 2014). There is no single generally accepted definition, theory or model of integration; rather, it is rarely a straightforward process and imbued with complexity, challenges and multi-dimensional concepts (Castles et al., 2002; Spencer, 2004; Griffiths, Sigona and Zetter, 2005). Broadly speaking, integration is a two-way process which disregards a top-down approach or a hierarchical explanation of integration by including newcomers, host society and social institutions (Phillimore and Goodson, 2008). Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx (2016: 11) refers to integration as the 'process of settlement, interaction with the host society, and social change that follows immigration'. To this end, integration is viewed as a holistic approach comprising several dimensions such as economic, social, civil and political rights, and functional (employment, education and housing) and social domains (relations and participation) (Ager and Strang, 2008; Berry, 2012; Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx, 2016). In particular, the importance of social relationships between migrants and hosts, fostering a sense of belonging and exercising rights and resources such as education, work and housing have been highlighted (Phillimore, 2012). Indeed, scholars find integration to involve access to public services, developing social capital and a two-way, multi-dimensional process that occurs between the newcomers and receiving society (Olwig, 2011; Phillimore, 2012). Overall, successful integration depends on migrants' access to services, resources and opportunities, participation in local community and society, feeling of safety and society and a sense of belonging in their new homes (Ager and Strang, 2008; Phillimore and Goodson, 2008; Hynie, 2018).

A few models of integration have been introduced to understand how integration happens at different levels. Scholars identify specific social,

economic and cultural domains required for integration (Ager and Strang, 2008; Phillimore, 2012). Ager and Strang (2008) notably provide the indicators of integration framework consisting of four domains: markers and means (housing, health, employment, education) that represents the functional aspects of integration and reflect the formal social protection; social connections (social bonds, social bridges, social links) that represent various forms of social networks and informal social protection; facilitators (language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability); and foundation (rights and citizenship). These domains affect integration at different levels and affect each other; thus a change in one domain can positively or negatively change other domains. In particular, the provision of functional aspects (formal social protection) of integration addresses ASRs' vulnerabilities, and enables the development of social capital (informal social protection) and integration in their receiving society while learning about their host society through the social services, health systems, educational institutions and other major intervention programmes (Olwig, 2011; Phillimore, 2012).

While each domain has significant interrelatedness and affects each other, the relationship between service provision and integration is complex. Although there are available services for asylum seekers such as accommodation and financial support, the level of support has been unacceptable; they are placed in sub-standard housing in deprived neighbourhoods (Phillips, 2006) and low levels of income or financial support are provided (Allsopp, Sigona and Phillimore, 2014) that not only affect their wellbeing but also hinder integration and social inclusion (Hartley, Fleay and Tye, 2017). Refugees also face challenges due to difficulties in finding suitable jobs and non-recognition of previous work experiences and qualifications (Phillimore, 2020). Furthermore, both asylum seekers and refugees with limited language skills have greater difficulty in accessing mainstream services (Cheung and Phillimore, 2014). Meanwhile, a lack of structural or functional integration prevents individuals from engaging in society and building rapport with others (Kearns and Whitley, 2015). Scholars therefore highlight functional dimensions – education and training, the labour market, health, and housing – as critical for integration (Ager and Strang,

2008), and thus, ASRs access and achieve these functional aspects in order to engage with other domains (Kearns and Whitley, 2015).

Furthermore, legal barriers to access services are detrimental to integration, especially for asylum seekers with many restrictions (Bloch, 2000b). Immigration and integration policies and approaches significantly challenge the functional markers of integration such as housing, healthcare and education (Strang and Ager, 2010). For instance, a protracted asylum process affects asylum seekers' ability to fully settle and engage in their host community. In Chapter 2, UK-wide immigration policies and specific integration policies in the UK and Scotland were discussed and highlighted their differences and impacts on ASRs.

In addition to the functional aspects, social connections have been another significant aspect of integration that relates to informal social protection. A 'lack of meaningful, supportive relationships' (Simich et al, 2003: 885) and the absence of readily available social networks and support for ASRs are significant barriers for integration (Stewart et al., 2008). A lack of social connection, the informal dimension of social protection, has negative impacts on ASR integration. Social networks are valuable sources of information (Cheung and Phillimore, 2014; Bilecen, 2019) and provide a feeling of belonging (Simich, Beiser and Mawani, 2003), and a forum to share common experiences (Strang and Quinn, 2014). Therefore, without social connection or networks providing information or support, it is likely that one will feel excluded from society. This study demonstrates how informal social networks facilitate ASRs' integration in Glasgow.

Integration in the contemporary migration context cannot be discussed without referring to social inclusion. Social inclusion is widely used interchangeably with integration (Narli and Özaşçılar, 2020) as it predominantly relies on integration (Bauloz, Vathi and Acosta, 2019). Social inclusion is often considered as a concept opposite to social exclusion. While social exclusion relates to numerous disadvantages an individual or groups face in various sectors such as education, housing and health (Castles et al., 2002; Levitas et al., 2007), social inclusion 'is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity,

and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity' (World Bank, 2020: online). The Global Compact for Migration (GCM) and the separate Global Compact for Refugees (GCR), are recent UN agreements to promote effective international cooperation on integrational migration and the protection of refugees. The CGM's 16th objective emphasises the significance to 'empower migrants and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion' (McAdam, 2019: 184). Acknowledging the fact that each country, society and community has different approaches to inclusion, GCM indicates the significance of inclusion polices to facilitate migrants' inclusion.

Two factors influencing migrants' inclusion have been highlighted: migrants themselves and the context. Firstly, social inclusion is a 'highly personal and individualized' for migrants (Bauloz, Vathi and Acosta, 2019: 187), a process where individuals function as active agents (O'Reilly, 2005; Ponic and Frisby, 2010). Migrants themselves play an important role in social inclusion as active agents rather than passive recipients of support. However, migrants' inclusion is affected by their demographic and personal characteristics, social networks and ability to exercise agency. Secondly, social inclusion is context-dependent and it primarily occurs at the local level, 'on the ground', and therefore the context (geographical location and timing) significantly shapes migrants' inclusion (Bauloz, Vathi and Acosta, 2019: 200). Although state is a major player, local actors such as local communities (citizens and migrant communities), civil society organisations, local authorities and the third sector play a crucial role in facilitating migrants' inclusion. As discussed in Chapter 2, examples of local initiatives and approaches in Glasgow and Scotland reflect the importance of local context in realising migrants' inclusion. While individual factors such as gender, age, education and networks affect social inclusion, migrants' inclusion is also shaped by domestic political and economic context (Narli and Özaşçılar, 2020). A focus on social inclusion should therefore consider contextual factors and individual agency as significant determinants (Bauloz, Vathi and Acosta, 2019; Mohammadi, 2019). These two determinants are considered in this thesis, and importance has been given to the voices of ASRs to understand their personal experiences of social inclusion (integration).

Furthermore, social inclusion for migrants is primarily seen as inclusion in social structures such as education, health, employment, housing, civic participation and political involvement (Bauloz, Vathi and Acosta, 2019; Svoen, Dobson and Bjørge, 2019). However, it is not only about merely achieving access and participation in those societal structures but also relates to migrants' sense of belonging and wellbeing. Dobson, Agrusti and Pinto (2019: 4) view social inclusion as 'the process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for refugees who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, authentic experiences of belonging and wellbeing and voicing respect for human rights'. Thus, social inclusion is a multifaceted process involving more than improving access to social structures, which is also reflected in my findings.

The interconnectedness of service provision and integration of ASRs still needs further exploration, however. Integration is considered to be a long-term initiative of a nation-centred perspective (Favell, 2003), a novel project for nation-building (Hampshire, 2013) and the inclusion of newcomers in a long-term autonomous process (Entzinger and Biezeveld, 2005). Effective integration can happen only when there is an equal treatment irrespective of an individual's place of origin or status, their access to social institutions, services and welfare. However, the integration processes differ due to different experiences in the receiving society in accordance with their migratory status (Castles et al., 2002). The scholarly debate also suggests that there is a top-down understanding of integration that mainly focuses on the perspectives of receiving states and societies' demands for integration rather than ASRs who encounter the state-imposed process of everyday integration. Integration is problematic because of the politicisation of integration and focus on narrow determinants and outcomes (Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore, 2018). In particular, it becomes a notion that influences ideas about who belongs and who does not belong in a specific society. What ASRs think about integration, what it means for them and how they feel about social protection contributions are therefore important questions that need exploration. The research undertaken in this thesis aims

to understand the relationship between social protection and integration and focuses on ASRs' experiences in Glasgow.

3.4. Interconnecting social protection, vulnerability and integration

Migrants are more prone to vulnerabilities and risks as they move between different countries, systems and forms of lifecycle (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). Vulnerable individuals 'are those most exposed to perturbations, who possess the most limited coping capability, who suffer the most from crisis impact and who are endowed with the most circumscribed capacity for recovery' (Watts and Bohle, 1993: 45). ASRs are often portrayed in the existing literature as vulnerable individuals who are in need of support. Their indications of vulnerabilities depend on an individual's ability to act within the personal, social and structural circumstances, such as political domain (immigration and integration policies), cultural backgrounds, identities, length of residence, social connections and impacts of racism and discrimination (Phillips, 2006; Bosworth and Guild, 2008; Stewart, 2009; Jayaweera, 2018). In particular, the infringement of ASRs' rights highlights how they are unable to live a dignified life in the UK (Sales, 2002; Stewart and Mulvey, 2014). Black (1994) suggests vulnerability performs a crucial determinant in whether an individual is worthy and deserving of welfare assistance, and hence the vulnerable situation of ASRs plays a crucial role in shaping the responsibilities of service providers and levels of service provision. This research lays out specific vulnerabilities faced by ASRs in Glasgow to draw attention to their experiences of social protection.

Vulnerable ASRs require special provisions to 'ensure that they can adequately manage their risks' (Sabates-Wheeler, 2009: 3). The foundation of social protection is perceived and positioned to address vulnerable populations' vulnerabilities by targeted criteria or means-tested assistance delivered by multiple actors via formal and informal systems. Social protection through service provision aims at 'preventing, reducing and overcoming adverse circumstances which affect wellbeing' (Paul, 2017: 33). While social protection remains a limited field of research in relation to ASRs, this thesis focuses on understanding available social protection. It is necessary to

examine the extent to which available social protection shapes the level of vulnerability experienced by ASRs.

While a focus on social protection is the core of this thesis, integration remains important. As the discussion about integration suggests, there are many ways and approaches to measure integration. However, within this thesis, the conceptual discussion around social protection and integration will be linked to analyse the experiences of ASRs in Glasgow. From the above literature, it can be observed that by examining social protection we can illuminate the importance of access to integration. For instance, in Ager and Strang's (2008) indicators of integration, two significant domains, means and markers (housing, education and health) and social connections, are more relevant to formal and informal dimensions of social protection.

Thus, the role of formal and informal dimensions is significant to provide basic services to ASRs as well as promoting integration. For instance, education, health and housing have been identified as some of the key areas to promote structural integration (Phillips, 2006; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017); however, there has been a lack of studies on how social protection promotes and facilitates integration, and thus this research will fill that gap. On the other hand, the thesis also investigates the converse link between integration and social protection, by way of providing evidence on how ASRs who are better integrated have a more positive experience of social protection – both formal and informal.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter discussed three concepts pertinent to this thesis: social protection, vulnerability and integration. These diverse yet interrelated concepts provide the foundation for the analysis of findings presented in the empirical chapters that follow.

Social protection is foundational to this thesis; thus, this chapter has used social protection as a lens through which to analyse and understand how ASRs make use of different provisions of support and assistance, whether formal, informal or semi-formal. While more attention has been given to formal

social protection, not much attention has been given to the potential of informal and semi-formal social protection mechanisms. The exploration of social protection as a concept problematised the clear-cut division between the formal and informal social protection systems, which emphasised the role of assemblages in social protection. For that reason, exploring how ASRs access various resources to address their needs reveals distinct yet interconnected features of different social protection sources and mechanisms.

Social protection shapes the personal experiences of individuals in society. ASRs are vulnerable in everyday encounters in their new context of settlement and this stresses the importance of considering their experiences of vulnerability. The conceptual discussion of vulnerability recognises the need to look beyond single aspects of vulnerability. While there have been different definitions and debates around vulnerability, the above discussion of this concept identified the need to recognise spatial, socio-political, socio-cultural and temporal experiences of vulnerability. Wellbeing is examined as a separate yet related concept to explore the subjective experiences of participants and gain an understanding of how ASRs address their vulnerabilities, as well as the effectiveness of different forms of social protection in this regard.

Furthermore, some current debates around integration and how scholars have conceptualised integration in the literature have been explored in this chapter. Contemporary scholarly debates suggest that integration should be viewed through a multi-dimensional approach whereby individuals, society and the state each have their roles and responsibilities. This research has used integration to explore ASRs' experience of how social protection shapes their integration.

4. Methodology

4.1.Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach employed to investigate ASRs' experiences of social protection in Glasgow. A qualitative methodology was determined as the most suitable for examining the following three key research questions:

- What are asylum seekers and refugees' experiences of formal and informal social protection elements?
- To what extent and in what ways does social protection affect their initial experiences upon arrival?
- To what extent and how does access to social protection facilitate and promote social inclusion and integration of asylum seekers and refugees?

This chapter outlines the research design, sampling and field setting, data collection and analysis, reflexivity and positionality, and ethical considerations. It begins with an explanation of why a qualitative approach was determined as most suitable for this study and outlines the interpretivist paradigm, drawing on relevant academic literature. Section 4.3 of this chapter focuses on sampling and research setting; detailed information about the research participants and their identities is presented. This section also includes a discussion of fieldwork undertaken in Glasgow and the challenges that I encountered, particularly in relation to having to employ strategies for participant recruitment. Section 4.4 discusses data collection methods, which involved conducting semi-structured interviews. Participant observation and field notes are two additional methodological techniques used to complement the data collection process. This section also describes the challenges encountered when following the initial data collection plan. Section 4.5 discusses the data analysis process, which evaluated data thematically and organised it with the assistance of NVivo. The chapter also includes a section

(4.6) on the ethical issues considered in designing and conducting research, such as beneficence and non-maleficence, confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent and it concludes by presenting researcher reflexivity and accountable positionality in this research.

4.2. Research design

A qualitative methodology was applied in this research because of its benefits in studying people's experiences. Qualitative research assists in examining the aim of research in greater depth within its context (Morrow, 2007; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Lietz and Zayas, 2010). Words have multiple meanings, thus a qualitative approach generates patterns and meanings, and seeks to acquire in-depth information about a small group of participants (Creswell, 2003; Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2013). Qualitative research can describe 'interactions among multiple variables in detail with one or a few participants, providing possible insight into how many relevant factors can interrelate' (Tomlin and Swinth, 2015: 2). In other words, the qualitative research approach allows for new understanding to emerge by critically deconstructing interactions and narratives. The qualitative approach is thus apt for conducting several levels of analysis, such as ASRs' experiences and service providers' views of social protection. A further benefit of the qualitative approach is that participants provide their narratives on their own terms rather than being ascribed the generalised meanings of others (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Hence a qualitative methodology was suitable for this research to examine the complex and sensitive experiences of ASRs.

The interpretivist approach offers an appropriate epistemological position to explore the experiences and views of asylum seekers, refugees and service providers in Glasgow. In interpretive research, 'knowledge is gained, or at least filtered, through social constructions such as language, consciousness, and shared meanings' (Rowlands, 2005). The interpretivist approach captures the meaning of human interaction (Black, 2006) and interprets the position of participants without generalising the causes and effects (Neuman, 2014). As Barry (2009) suggests, a situation could be interpreted without defining it as right or wrong, but it is based on how an individual views that situation and

interprets it. However, the researcher understands that adopting the interpretivist approach requires understanding motives, reasons and meanings, including subjective meanings, within the given context and time (Neuman, 2014).

The use of interpretivism in research acknowledges individuals as unique, accepts that there are multiple interpretations of a situation or event and recognises that situations will be viewed through the eyes of participants (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2013). While the possibility of multiple interpretations has been noted, attention is also given to similarities among interpretations because the interpretivist paradigm focuses on recognising and narrating meanings of human experiences (Fossey et al., 2002; Levers, 2013). Qualitative research tends to work with text and this accommodates the interpretive approach because both will explore the concepts based on the meanings assigned by the participants (Rowlands, 2005).

I undertook fieldwork in Glasgow from June 2018 until September 2018. This timeline was chosen to balance my simultaneous contractual obligations as a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Edge Hill University and as a postgraduate research student. Owing to these obligations, my supervisor and I decided that I would conduct fieldwork during summer 2018. The limited time I had for conducting fieldwork presented a challenge because, as Miller (2004: 218) states, ‘entering refugee communities is a complicated process that takes time, negotiation, and respect for the gradual development of relations based on trust and mutual respect’. Conducting fieldwork posed additional challenges because Glasgow was a new and unfamiliar location for me. Nevertheless, after several weeks of undertaking residential fieldwork in Glasgow, I had made contacts and began recruiting participants, completing my overall fieldwork within that timeframe.

4.3.Sampling and setting

Glasgow was chosen as the location for this doctoral research as the city has several relevant features. The only local authority to receive asylum seekers in Scotland since 2000, Glasgow is also the largest dispersal location in the

UK (Mulvey, 2015). Being the only dispersal location in Scotland, Glasgow provides an important perspective regarding the impact of immigration and integration policies in a devolved context. As mentioned in Chapter 2, there are significant differences between the Scottish and wider UK support for ASRs; thus, Glasgow presents an interesting and unique context within which to explore social protection for ASRs. Glasgow is a multicultural and diverse community that has serious deprivation issues, and therefore, it is a valuable context within which to explore the experiences of ASRs living there. Within Glasgow, fieldwork occurred in various locations such as Maryhill, Castlemilk, Govan, Govanhill, Gorbals and Central Glasgow.

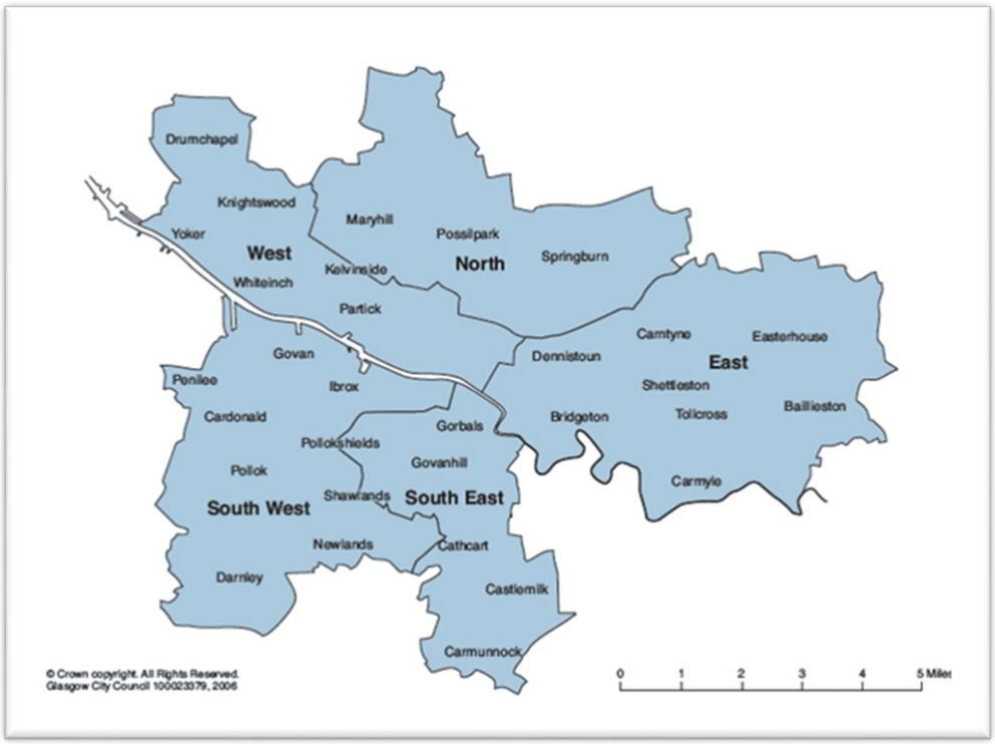

***Figure 3**: Glasgow City Map*

For this research, 30 ASRs, and 20 staff from service providing organisations were interviewed. Children (those under age 18) were not included in this research for three reasons: first, in the formal social protection, more focus is given to adults; second, adults directly interact with service providers; third, children were deemed ethically problematic. However, the narratives of the participants who had families revealed experiences of the children and the importance they have in the families' social protection and integration strategies. Furthermore, ASRs' status or country of origin were not considered

determinants for exclusion. Therefore, anyone who claimed asylum in the UK was identified as a potential participant despite the outcome of their application, length of residency in the UK, and regardless of their nationality of origin. All efforts were made to recruit a similar number of males and females in order to understand the effect of gender, although in the end, accessing males was easier. Nonetheless, this approach facilitated a heterogeneous sample enabling this research to encompass a broad range of issues. Table 1 provides a summary of numbers of interviewed ASR participants. See Appendix A1 for demographic information about the participants.

Type	Number	Gender	
		Male	**Female**
Asylum Seekers	16	12	04
Refugees	14	08	06
Total	**30**	**20**	**10**

***Table 1**: Number of ASRs*

Most participants were from the Middle East and North African (MENA) region. Over half of the participants were from Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Namibia. No significant differences in employment are reflected, while all of them are of working age. Only a few participants were employed, which suggests a lack of employment opportunities for refugees. Their education reflects their highest achievement gained in their home countries, yet these qualifications were obtained in their local languages. More than half of the participants were married with children, who lived with them in Glasgow. A minority were planning to bring their family members to the UK.

In addition, 20 staff from the third sector, statutory sector and private sector were interviewed for this research. The third sector included non-government organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations and integration networks, while the statutory sector included agencies such as the National Health Service (NHS), GCC and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). One participant represented the asylum housing provider in Glasgow.

4.4. Participant recruitment

Two sampling methods were employed: purposive and snowball. Purposive sampling draws on a range of non-random sampling techniques (Bryman, 2015) and assisted with the identification and selection of information-rich individuals or groups who have knowledge and experience useful to researchers in a specific field of study (Patton, 2014; Palinkas et al., 2015). I also employed the snowball method to facilitate recruitment in an informal way through social networking and interpersonal approach (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). Snowball sampling was particularly useful as a nonprobability approach to engage with sensitive and hard-to-access populations (Heckathorn, 2011; Dean et al., 2012), such as ASRs.

Fieldwork can influence research design (Creswell, 2003; Brinkmann and Kvale, 2005) and this was the case for my research. After embarking on fieldwork, I made the decision to alter my participant recruitment methods. ASRs and staff were consequently recruited using various approaches outlined as follows.

The initial approach was directly meeting ASRs and staff (TSOs and state agencies) at social events and recruiting them. In particular, the Refugee Festival week (2018) in Glasgow offered the first opportunity to access potential participants. This event took place at the beginning of fieldwork, which helped to effectively learn about different organisations and their activities. I met ASRs and staff from service providing organisations who attended events such as Refugee Festival Scotland opening day, Kinning Park social Sunday run by the Govan Community Project (GCP), Ethiopian coffee ceremony run by Ethio-Scottish Community, and the Interfest and book launch run by Central and West Integration Network. These events helped me to share my research with attendees in an informal way and encourage people to participate. Although I had opportunities to meet ASRs at those events, it was challenging to share information as a result of language barriers. However, I used the Google translator app on my smartphone to facilitate communication. Possessing a smartphone with internet connection proved useful for engaging with ASRs. This was a successful first step for

participant recruitment because a few ASRs accepted the invitation to participate and others expressed interest although they later reconsidered.

Refugee Festival Week events also provided a platform to approach staff from organisations that work towards supporting ASRs in Glasgow. For example, What Works Scotland organised a seminar called 'Where Next for Syrian Resettlement in Scotland?' on the 20th of June 2018. What Works Scotland brought together researchers, the public sector and the third sector stakeholders to discuss experiences of refugee resettlement and integration in Scotland. Stakeholders such as the NHS, the SRC, GCC, COSLA, Save the Children, and Govan Community Project participated in this event. Thus, this event provided me with an opportunity to approach several workers from the third sector and public sector organisations to share my research. As a result of my interaction with these members of staff, several individuals invited me to present my research to them in detail and to their organisation's staff and volunteers and directed me to other potential organisations. For instance, a staff member who I met at this event directed me to several other professionals and organisations such as the SRC, GCC and BRC**.** Without having made this connection, approaching individuals from these organisations for research interviews may have been more difficult.

Furthermore, invitations to attend network meetings that the integration networks and charities organised were useful for meeting and gaining introduction to discuss my project with them and later follow up. In particular, I had been trying to communicate with a particular staff member from Serco and was seeking an opportunity for a meeting but my email requests to this person went unanswered. However, at an integration network meeting that I attended, I managed to speak to that particular Serco staff member, share my research and arranged to speak further. Overall, direct engagement with staff was fruitful because these meetings often resulted in an interview.

On another occasion, a volunteer staff member who I met invited me to share my research with her organisation staff. Hence, I booked an appointment with her and went to that organisation on the day after our first meeting. Although I was punctual, I had to wait for staff, volunteers and ASRs who take part in

their organisation activities to arrive since they were late due to an English lesson class going over time. While we were waiting for them arrive, the staff member took me to another charity nearby and introduced me to them. Being introduced to other organisation's staff added more credibility and expediated rapport when the introduction came via a staff member of another service providing organisation working with ASRs. It could have been time consuming and difficult had I tried to contact people in the other organisation without the second-party introduction. This introduction resulted in another meeting on the same day with the manager of the other organisation and she invited me to take part in their monthly staff meeting to share my research. The following week, they allocated me a 20-minute meeting to discuss my research aims, method and ethical considerations. I also provided them with several information sheets in Arabic, Farsi and English since the ASRs involved with this organisation spoke those languages. I encouraged the organisation staff to ask me questions and raise any concerns. After my introduction, the manager told me that any interested individuals would contact me to arrange a time for an interview. This approach was successful as it resulted in 5 individuals contacting me of which 3 were interviewed.

Participants were also recruited through TSOs. I know from experience that ASRs prefer to be in groups. Thus, I sought out places where ASRs congregated, such as integration networks and charities (see Annex A7 for a list of organisations). All the organisations I visited were provided with information about the research, including its aims, recruitment strategy, participant inclusion criteria, the data collection process and ethical considerations. Several TSOs became intermediaries and helped me to recruit potential participants. Senior and general staff of these charities are gatekeepers to ASRs, and so meeting them face to face and sharing information about the research directly was a valuable fieldwork strategy. Reeves (2010) suggests that gaining access through managers or supervisors (formal gatekeepers) can ensure the researcher's access to target population and give credibility to the research. Formal gatekeepers' understanding and knowledge of ASRs' circumstances and abilities was helpful. Furthermore, engaging formal gatekeepers helped me with the

expectation some ASRs had that organisation staff would be involved in the process. My interaction with TSOs was positively received and staff disseminated information about my research sharing leaflets on notice boards and in meetings. In particular, small charities and faith-based organisations assisted me and became involved in recruiting participants by sharing information and encouraging ASRs to participate. Some ASRs who wished to participate contacted me directly and others informed staff of their interest. Staff then contacted me to arrange a suitable time to meet the participant or provided me with their contact details.

While meeting charity leaders and staff face to face and sharing information about the research directly was a valuable fieldwork strategy, so too was volunteering in TSOs. Personally volunteering proved an effective strategy to recruit participants, which follows an ethnographic tradition of being physically present in the research setting (Sixsmith, Boneham and Goldring, 2003). Volunteering was advantageous to my fieldwork as I became involved in the participants' world. I volunteered for 4 TSOs and this helped me gain proximity to ASRs and staff in the field. When discussing participant recruitment with staff from TSOs, in two organisations, I was asked to apply formally to become a volunteer while in the other two, I simply volunteered. Once the relevant officers' approval was granted, I became involved in various activities (See Table 2). I also approached several other organisations to volunteer and a few of them politely declined my request stating that they already have sufficient volunteers and could not accommodate me. Others did not reply to my emails. It occurred to me that being a researcher could be a reason for organisation staff to decline my request to volunteer because my presence may change the group dynamics and ASRs attending those organisations might feel uncomfortable. Nevertheless, finding four organisations to volunteer with was fortunate and so I stopped offering to be a volunteer considering time and accessibility issues. These four organisations provided more consistent opportunities to observe ASRs, their organisation activities and share my research to further recruit participants.

Joining in with activities provided opportunities to interact with different people in various contexts yet it did not guarantee instant rapport. It took more than 2

or 3 weeks to establish rapport with groups of ASRs. From day one of my volunteering, I ensured that I arrived at the organisation early so that I could interact with other volunteers who were ASRs themselves. Often, I also volunteered to make a cup of tea of coffee for them so I could talk to them and make myself approachable. Later on, they gradually became friendly once they recognised me as part of their day-to-day life in those activities and organisations. After three weeks, my continuous involvement helped to establish a good rapport with a small group of ASRs, there then arose the opportunity to inform them about my research and invite them to be interviewed.

Personal volunteering as a research method had some disadvantages: for instance, time is required for volunteering. I had to allocate time for joining in activities which meant doing jobs like arranging tables or tidying up after an event. While such jobs seemed unrelated or unhelpful to participant recruitment, they were hard to avoid since they are a part of volunteering in such organisations. Nevertheless, as I recall, my initial interaction with a volunteer in a charity in Gorbals was started when we were cleaning the tables and chairs after a community meal. Since the other volunteer could see me, as we were the only people to stay late and perform cleaning, she began asking questions such as when I started volunteering, where I was from, what I was doing and so on. Answering those questions led me to share information about my research and my purpose for being in Glasgow. Therefore, engaging in seemingly mundane activities facilitated meeting people and connecting with others including ASRs, other volunteers and staff.

Organisation	Types of Activities	Days	Volunteering hours/week
Charity A in Castlemilk	• Furniture project	Wednesdays and Fridays	8–10
	• Welcoming service users		
	• Completing ASRs' initial assessment form to acquire furniture		
	• Providing miscellaneous information		
	• Preparing tea/coffee for them		
Charity B in Gorbals	• Kitchen volunteer	Thursdays	5
	• Preparing vegetables		
	• Serving food		

	• Cleaning the dishes		
	• Engaging in group activities		
Integration network A	• Gardening activity	Tuesdays	2
Integration network B	• Community meal	Wednesdays	2
	• Serving food		
	• Cleaning		

***Table 2**: Volunteering activities*

Social media also proved useful for recruiting participants. Online social networks can be especially helpful in recruiting hard-to-reach research populations (Masson et al., 2013) with scholars identifying Facebook as a particularly valuable tool for participant recruitment (Baker, 2013; Sikkens et al., 2017). The Syrian Network in Glasgow Facebook group allowed me to connect with a wider network of potential participants. Information about the research was posted on the Facebook page in Arabic and English. The information, therefore, had a vast reach, regardless of the group members' nationalities. After reading a post on Syrian Network in Glasgow's Facebook page about my research, several potential participants contacted me via private message (Figure 4).

***Figure 4**: Recruiting through social media: the Syrian Network in Glasgow*[8]

[8] https://www.facebook.com/syrian.network.glasgow/

Finally, I adopted snowball technique as a strategy to identify and recruit further participants. ASRs who expressed interest in participating and those who participated often introduced me to other potential participants and connected me with communities and organisations. Those who wished to assist were given adequate information about the research and were provided with copies of research information sheets. Since they themselves had already participated in this research as interviewees, they had knowledge about and personal experience of my research. Snowball technique was valuable and useful for finding potential participants during the fieldwork and individuals who connected me with potential participants did so without any expectations of mutual benefits. Nonetheless, it was anticipated that the participants recommended through snowball technique could be like-minded and might have similar thoughts and perspectives. However, the majority of those recruited through this snowball approach varied in relation to their ethnicities, localities, nationality, age category and gender, which reduced the risk of overrepresentation of one particular group of ASRs.

Although I applied various approaches to participant recruitment, converting potential participants to interviewees was often challenging because of individuals' personal circumstances, abilities and expectations. Many potential participants were not interested in academic research because it was not a priority for them, owing to their current life circumstances (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7). For instance, when I was doing an introductory presentation to some staff and volunteers in charity in Govan, one individual agreed to participate and then later reconsidered saying that this research is not going to be helpful to them. He decided not to participate even though I tried explaining the importance of this research for foregrounding ASRs' voices. Furthermore, many ASRs expected remuneration for their participation due to the limited financial support they received from the government. However, owing to a modest research budget and to avoid potential coercion, no incentive or remuneration was offered for participation in my research and thus many ASRs declined to participate once I informed them that there was no financial support being offered (see Figure 5).

After sharing information about the research to an Iranian refugee:	
Refugee:	Will you pay me for this interview? Do you know my interview is worth £50.00?
Niroshan:	No, unfortunately I will not be able to pay you due to financial constraints.
Refugee:	Oh, then I cannot participate in your research.

***Figure 5**: Field note 30.06.2018*

Further to the challenges of recruiting ASRs, it was difficult to recruit professionals who were working for ASRs in the statutory and the third sector; particularly workers from the statutory sector agencies such as the GCC, NHS and DWP. In some organisations, staff had to obtain permission from their superiors before speaking with me and they were unable to obtain permission in time. Another issue was that sometimes those I contacted through social events and who showed interest in participating in an interview asked me to contact their managers before they would speak to me because they wanted to avoid problems concerning representing an organisation. However, often my requests were denied by their managers, which reflects the hierarchical nature of such organisations. Furthermore, many organisations showed a lack of support for academic research due to the hectic nature of their work and the workers' heavy workloads. Some staff believed that academic research was unhelpful to ASRs, and thus assisting me with this research project was not a priority for them.

4.5. Data collection

4.5.1. Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview method was chosen because of its ability to foster healthy interactions between the researcher and respondents to understand their unique views and experiences (Ferguson, 2016). Semi-structured interviews allow for freedom of expression by providing flexibility when conversing (Harvey-Jordan and Long, 2001) and I noted that my participants, when interviewed, had the freedom to freely express themselves. Since I was interested in prioritising my participants' perspectives, this was the most effective data collection method for this research. The adaptive and

flexible interaction between the interviewer and interviewee allowed for reactive changes (Gillham, 2005). A participant unexpectedly said that because of the close relationship between Migrant Help and the Home Office, some ASRs consider them one and the same. This was interesting because I had not intended to question this relationship; however, the flexibility that semi-structured interviews afford meant that her comment prompted me to consider issues about trust between ASRs and service providers.

Arthur and Nazroo (2003) have recommended using a semi-structured interview guide that should contain questions relevant to the identified topics. I prepared a guideline for conducting semi-structured interviews that adopted the structure presented in Arthur and Nazroo (2003), comprising an introduction, opening questions, core in-depth questions and closure. The introduction focused on creating a pleasant atmosphere by introducing myself, explaining the research purpose and discussing ethical considerations, often with the help of interpreters. A full interview schedule for the ASRs and staff are included in Appendix A2 and A3. The basic semi-structured interview guide was translated into Arabic and Farsi for the interpreters' use.

Participants could choose an interview location and identify a suitable, convenient place where they felt comfortable and able to speak without disruption or fear of compromising confidentiality. I had anticipated that interviews with ASRs might take place either in a participant's home or at the premises of a service providing organisation; yet, all but one preferred being interviewed in public places. This was because participants – especially those with families – did not want an outsider entering into their private space. Their preference to meet in public places could be linked to the personal/familial privacy, safety and cultural aspects where outsiders are not routinely invited to their houses. For example, according to my interpreters, cultural aspects played a role whereby women did not want to invite outsiders into the home because their husbands might disapprove. Nevertheless, one refugee did invite me to his house to conduct the interview, perhaps because he was single and lived alone. Other interviews were conducted in local libraries in Glasgow, chosen for their suitability, which were suggested by participants.

Interviews averaged 50–60 minutes although some exceeded one hour in duration and this allowed for gathering detailed information, probing and asking additional questions. As mentioned, interviews were conducted using open-ended questions that allowed for flexibility, which helped participants freely share their experiences. Throughout the interviews, the majority of the participants arrived on time but a few of them arrived late due to their personal circumstances. In one incident, I waited for a participant for more than 2.5 hours since, she later told me, she had decided to go shopping with a friend. Fortunately, I had no other interviews scheduled that day. Had another interview been scheduled, I would have had to cancel one of them, which could have potentially resulted in the loss of a participant. After this incident, I left two to three hours between interviews in addition to the hour I kept as contingency in case participants took more time to speak than anticipated.

Another issue that I encountered during the interview process was that several participants were accompanied to the interview by their friends. This interrupted the interview on a few occasions when, for example, friends would text the participant or distract them using non-verbal communication or enter the interview space unexpectedly to speak to the participants. As a researcher, I had to accommodate this interruption and continue with the interview as it could make the participants uncomfortable had I requested friends not interrupt. Those who came with others showed disinterest in answering more than 10 to 15 questions and said that they felt the interview was too long, preferring shorter interviews, ideally around 30 minutes. I noticed that it seemed due to their friend's boredom and restlessness at waiting, which distracted them from the interview. On the contrary, a couple mothers who arrived with their children concentrated well on the interview. Although I considered that children may pose a significant distraction to their mother, I was surprised at how parents actively engaged and accommodated my questions despite their children occasionally causing distraction and displaying restlessness. These different scenarios presented the diverse individual dynamics and levels of interest among participants.

I used two professional interpreters for ASRs' interviews involving Arabic and Farsi languages. They were members of a company providing translation and

interpretation services in Glasgow. Using interpreters was important because they helped me to disseminate information about the research and communicate across language barriers. Both interpreters had previous experience assisting with research, which was helpful for conducting interviews smoothly. They were involved from the initial stages and scheduled interviews, explaining the research aims and process to participants. They also helped me establish trust with my participants and encouraged them to share their experiences with me. I observed that participants seemed to feel more comfortable with interpreters being present. The interpreters' awareness of ethical concerns, such as confidentiality and anonymity, was helpful for avoiding ethical dilemmas during interviews. While valuable resources, the use of interpreters posed several challenges. Although only a minor issue, at times, interviews had to be booked based on the interpreter's availability. The interpretation and translation process also slowed down the momentum of interviews, in some instances consuming more than half of the interview time.

While undeniably valuable resources, interpreters and their use posed a few challenges. Although only a minor issue, at times, interviews had to be booked based on the interpreter's availability. Sometimes it was not easy to coordinate the schedules of an interpreter and a participant. Furthermore, there were communication issues. Although I was giving instructions to the interpreters, and they seemed to explain things to the participants quite diligently, on occasion, I felt that interpreters were directing participants to answer certain questions rather than follow my instructions or interpret directly. At these times, I requested the interpreter avoid directing or providing additional information to participants when answering questions. The interpretation and translation process also slowed down the momentum of interviews, in some instances, consuming more than half of the interview time. Furthermore, the involvement of interpreters could have altered or influenced participants' narratives.

In addition to ASRs, employees from relevant service providers were also interviewed for this research. As with interviews conducted with ASRs, pre-planned semi-structured interview guides were prepared based on the services provided by particular organisations. For instance, COSLA does not

provide any direct services and so the interview guide focused more on policy and multi-level partnership in working for ASRs. Owing to these differences, prior to interviews involving service providers, I prepared separate interview guides based on the specifics of the organisation. Generally, these guides were not shared with any participants unless requested. Most of the interviews with employees were carried out in participants' offices. Only a few participants preferred to meet outside of their office and so we met at the Glasgow Caledonian University library or other public libraries in Glasgow. Participants mostly spent approximately 50–60 minutes being interviewed but some spent more than an hour sharing their experiences working for ASRs in Glasgow. Some interviews were shortened to 30 minutes due to participants' time restrictions and work-related tasks.

4.5.2. Participant observation

The participant observation method has been widely used across a range of settings and areas of study. While Geertz (2004) characterises participant observation as the researcher being physically present in the environment, Punch (1993: 194) states that as a participant-observer what the researcher has to do is to 'watch and listen'. Lofland et al. (2006) suggest participant observation brings the researcher closer to the everyday practice of the subjects they observe. The purpose of including observation was to better understand the interactions between asylum seekers, refugees and service providers, as well as my own interactions, as a researcher, with them. Undertaking participant observation while I volunteered at organisations assisted me to identify how activities were organised and prioritised, and the nature of interaction between the ASRs and service providers.

Wolcott's (1981) four strategies for carrying out observation were foundational for conducting my research: '"observe and record everything," "observe and look for nothing—that is, nothing in particular," "look for paradoxes," and "look for the key problem confronting the group"' (cited in Peshkin, 2001: 241). For observing and recording everything, Wolcott recommends taking a broader look around the field of interest that is being observed. A researcher conducting observation should have a good sense of their field before

focusing on specifics, because it helps them to become familiarised with the space (Richards, 2003). However, Wolcott also acknowledges that while an observer cannot look for everything, recording everything as part of a broader observation may be valuable. Observe and look for nothing – that is, nothing in particular, is valuable for complex situations where the observer 'feels overwhelmed by the complexity of all that is going on' (Wolcott, 1994: 162). Therefore, nothing in particular allows an observer to manage multiple events occurring in succession in one place, which could impede their ability to observe accurately. Richards (2003: 134) explains this strategy as 'treating a setting as "flat"' so that 'certain elements may then stand out, like "bumps"'. Looking for paradoxes involves noticing contradictions, while looking for the key problem confronting the group is self-evident, and can provide useful focus for observation. I found the fourth strategy was beneficial as I was focusing specifically on the problems that ASRs experience in Glasgow.

My involvement in activities shaped the participant observation included in this research. The primary activity for undertaking participant observation was drop-in sessions supplemented by other activities. Observing often revealed the asylum system's impacts on asylum seekers awaiting a decision. I witnessed their need for material support (food and clothes), financial support, frustration at being unable to work and anxiety over awaiting a decision; issues that also frequently arose in ASRs' interviews. Additionally, observation highlighted ASRs' need for social and emotional support and how they overcome such needs by interacting with people from their countries of origin or people of similar background. Moreover, observation revealed other aspects related to accessing services and support that interviews did not. I noticed that a group of ASRs who volunteer in Castlemilk, arrived early to the organisation premises and, before beginning to do their work, they normally make cups of teas/coffees and share stories about their lives. I could hear them talking about various problems in regard to applying for jobs or issues in English classes and problems with Serco. Someone might provide solutions to challenges based on their experiences or word-of-mouth stories. For example, one individual spoke about delays in finding a social housing and the person to whom they were speaking suggested going to the organisation

called Positive Action in Housing and seeking their help to communicate with GCC.

Significantly, participant observation revealed the crucial role TSOs play in assisting ASRs to integrate into Glaswegian society. Being part of an organisation and building good relationships with other staff and volunteers not only had a positive impact on ASRs but also the practicalities of providing support. For example, ASRs praising TSOs for providing volunteering opportunities that boosted their self-esteem and confidence to interact with local community members and even sometimes to seek answers from other service providers. There were also occasions when individuals in the organisations shared their frustration with the asylum system and with their organisation's incapacity to assist ASRs due to lack of funding or resources and they expressed sympathy for ASRs They sometimes told me that I should know about these concerns because I am a researcher and I should talk about them in my research.

Further to activities presented in Appendix A6, I attended and observed integration network meetings, GLADAN meetings and Refugee Festival Scotland (2018) events. On one occasion, an organisation asked me to attend a Shelter Scotland meeting on their behalf alongside a destitute asylum seeker. Attending this meeting produced opportunities to listen to more professionals' and ASRs' voices about housing issues in Glasgow. The small group activities that we did brought me closer to some other organisations helping ASRs and I was able to learn about them and gather contact details for a formal meeting.

As Watts (2011) highlights, participant observation as a method connects the researcher and participants and this method helped me build rapport with them. Yet, the method had disadvantages too. A major disadvantage was the time required for conducting observation. I had to allocate time for assisting with and partaking in activities that did not seem to directly contribute to observation or data collection; for example, arranging tables or tidying up after an event but these activities were a part of one's volunteering role in these kinds of organisations. However, engaging in such mundane activities was

advantageous for meeting and fostering positive relationships with others, including ASRs, other volunteers and staff. Participant observation provided a platform to gain first-hand experience of some of the activities TSOs implement to assist vulnerable ASRs in Glasgow. Observation also helped me to understand the practicalities of activities, such as drop-ins and other integration-related activities. Over time, conducting participant observation in different organisations allowed me to better understand the diversity of ASRs and their needs and experiences in different contexts.

4.5.3. Field notes

In qualitative research, making field notes is recognised as a data collection method commonly used to document observations (Patton, 2014; Hellesø, 2016). My field notes were primarily based on conversations I had with event attendees, conversations among group members or participants and social interaction between ASRs. During fieldwork, I regularly recorded field notes of my reflexive experiences, emotions and memories.

Note-taking varied according to the activities in which I participated. Mostly, I was involved in the volunteer activities, like drop-in sessions. While participating, I did not have the opportunity to take many notes. At times, I was only partly involved in activities, which enabled note taking. At Refugee Week events and other events such as meetings, I observed without being involved in activities and so I typically made field notes immediately afterwards. Indeed, this was also the case with volunteering activities and community events. Field notes were also used to record useful information when encountered (Figure 6).

> Today, I participated in the Refugee Politics symposium at the Scottish Parliament. In this event, scholar highlighted several key dilemmas in refugee settlement in Scotland.
>
> - Age has a significant role in determining aspirations and needs of refugees.
> - The speaker pointed out that those who enter the UK via organised and coordinated settlement have been seen as good refugees while others labelled as bad refugees.

Figure 6: Field note 15.06.2018

The majority of the field notes taken from participant observation during my volunteering in organisations were recorded on my smartphone. I used my smartphone to quickly note down key observations because I found that taking a notebook out of my bag and writing something in front of others could draw attention or be awkward, while the use of a smartphone was normalised as these devices are ubiquitous. Sometimes it was not possible to take notes while inside a communal area and so I had to exit the room or visit the bathroom in order to make a note.

Field notes were also made after interviews to document off-the-record information that participants shared. This occurred with individuals who declined audio recording of our conversation. Subsequently, field notes were used to supplement the data collected. Moreover, making field notes facilitated and provided essential context to inform the analysis. For example, participants raised several key points during the off-the-record interviews. One said that many asylum seekers took advantage of employment opportunities and violated the asylum claim process conditions. However, in the audio-recorded interviews, none of the asylum seekers mentioned this. The way that ASRs deal with restrictions such as engaging with unauthorised employment was a key insight of asylum seekers' experiences in Glasgow.

In addition to written content, photos provided by the relevant charities (sources are mentioned under each photo) are used in this thesis to illustrate some available services and activities involving ASRs.

4.6. Data analysis

The analysis of data conducted for this research project is grounded in an interpretivist perspective. I applied thematic analysis, which is seen as a foundational approach to analyse diverse and complex qualitative data (Nowell et al., 2017). As Braun and Clarke (2006: 82) note, 'a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set'. Since this research focuses primarily on experiences and opinions of formal

social protection, the thematic analysis assists in understanding the narratives of participants (Braun and Clarke, 2006). My analysis is based on a combination of themes derived from the literature review and conceptual framework, and codes that emerged from the primary data. Stemler (2001) discussed this coding approach as emergent and priori (pre) coding. In emergent coding, codes are drawn from the primary data text. Precoding was applied to identify relevant themes from the conceptual framework applied in this research (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Gale et al., 2013).

Following this emergent and priori technique, coding and analysis were structured according to the following key steps. The first step is gaining familiarisation with the material by listening to audio recordings and reading transcripts. All the recordings were listened to more than twice to give emphasis to the narratives used by the participants. The transcribed interviews were re-read to familiarise myself with the data. To facilitate the analysis, all the collected data including the audio recordings, transcribed interviews and field notes were uploaded on to NVivo to facilitate coding and analysis. Some participants' quotes used in this thesis were edited for clarity and to correct grammatical errors.

Second, themes were identified based on interview transcripts. Following the priori coding, I identified key themes based on the research questions, emergent ideas participants shared, and patterns reflecting particular views and experiences. Three broad code categories were formed from the conceptual framework of this research: *social protection*, *vulnerabilities* and *integration*. Social protection is focused on formal (housing, financial benefits, education and healthcare), informal and semi-formal social protection elements. Vulnerabilities were broadly categorised under spatial, socio-political, socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions. Integration themes focused on views on integration, and routes and barriers to integration. Simultaneously, the themes that emerged from the primary data through the interpretivist approach were added under the priori coding to correlate with the research questions and theoretical frameworks. While key themes were determined on the basis of my research questions, a number of themes and sub-themes emerged as a result of repeat, in-depth reviews of transcripts.

This way of coding allowed me to organise the data gained from interviews in a way that addressed the research questions. Attention was given to identifying themes, both patterns and anomalies, within the data.

Third, based on the thematic framework identified through analysis of transcripts, thematic categories were indexed and recorded in textual form (indexing). As per the themes and indexes, I categorised excerpts from the transcripts, meaning relevant quotes were taken from their original context and arranged thematically. A document was compiled with quotes of extracts from the transcripts under the identified themes and sub-themes. The final step of the analysis collated all the key themes, mapped and interpreted the data as a whole. This action included reviewing the charts, comparing them and exploring the patterns – a process that assisted with finding explanations for the patterns/themes within the data.

The voices of asylum seekers, refugees and service providers became meaningful during the data analysis process. For example, within the broad code ‘housing’, sub-themes emerged, such as ASRs’ understanding of the housing support system, access to information, challenges in housing services (waiting time, quality of the houses and so on). In particular, underlying structural issues behind the access to services began to make sense. For instance, asylum seekers’ lack of English language proficiency and technological capabilities (such as computer literacy) had affected their access to service. Throughout their experiences of social protection, ASRs’ narratives pointed out informal social protection themes such as informal support (in bureaucratic processes), helping with information and signposting. Meanwhile, the presence of semi-formal social protection was uncovered through the theme of access to additional support and TSOs. Furthermore, new codes such as space or location, limbo, uncertainty, trust and wellbeing emerged under the category of vulnerability. In particular, space or locational code uncovered further categories such as locality, neighbourhood relationships, new environment and languages issues. Under the broader integration themes, several themes emerged, such as subjective views of integration, drop-ins and inclusion, informal networks, and the third sector as a navigations mechanism.

4.7. Ethics

Following Edge Hill University's Code of Practice for the Conduct of Research and the code of responsibility and duty under the Research Ethics Policy, my research went through ethical scrutiny and received approval from the Social Sciences Departmental Research Ethics Committee and Faculty of Arts and Sciences Research Ethics Committee. Edge Hill Research Ethics Policy emphasises that researchers have a duty of care to the research participants and themselves. As a researcher, I considered issues such as confidentiality, informed consent, treating participants with dignity, avoiding harm or deception, and appropriate dissemination.

Scholars highlight that research participants should be given 'adequate information about what involvement in the research will entail' (King, Horrocks and Brooks, 2018: 30). The process of gaining informed consent addresses various issues such as fair power balance between researcher and participants, participants' understanding of the conditions of consent and, during the data collection process, ensuring participant autonomy, their making their own decisions and exercising their rights (Turner and Fozdar, 2010). An informed consent process ensures participants' confidentiality and understanding of their right to withdraw (Fang et al., 2011). Edge Hill Research Ethics Policy's code on sensitivity and duty of care required that research participants should have the right to withdraw from the research within a clearly defined timeframe. Accordingly, I took steps to ensure that participants understood what it meant to participate in this research, the nature of the research and their rights, such as declining to participate, stopping at any stage and their right to withdraw (in this case up until 28 days after the interview). Moreover, research participants were afforded time to consider the project information and ask questions prior to and during the interview process. To facilitate the informed consent process, project information sheets and consent forms in English, Arabic and Farsi were provided to research participants. To ensure the reliability of the translation, documents were created using a dual-format – English was translated into Arabic and vice versa.

While interviews were carried out only with the participants' informed consent, in some cases where individuals did not want to sign the consent form, consent was verbal. Requesting a signed consent was problematic for different reasons. Scholars highlight that written consent forms are inappropriate for individuals with low literacy and may create trust issues (Merry et al., 2016; Dobbs and Levitt, 2017), and this was relevant to ASRs in this research. Killawi et al. (2014) further note the cultural concerns in non-western countries, where written consent is reserved only for special formal occasions and asking for it could lead to suspicion. This is significant because my key informants were from the MENA region. Several participants said that verbal consents are more effective than written/signed forms because providing written consent can raise suspicion and cause anxiety. Mackenzie, McDowell and Pittaway (2007) suggest that a more appropriate way forward is to create agreements in a process of ongoing negotiations in the research process. Therefore, oral consents could be used as an alternative to research ASRs and migrants (European Commission, 2020) and could address issues of trust and low literacy (Merry et al., 2016). The Social Sciences Department Research Ethics Committee approved the application for collecting verbal consent.

Edge Hill University's Ethical Guidance for undertaking research with vulnerable adults (managing risk contents) emphasises the need for care towards the research participants. As a researcher, I ensured that the wellbeing (physical, social and psychological) of individuals participating in this research was not adversely affected. For ASRs, the research experience might be distressing and re-traumatising. For staff, considering how ASRs have been treated, sharing experiences with ASRs might expose them to emotional distress such as guilt, anger and frustration. Hence, as the primary researcher, I endeavoured to minimise the risk. In particular, interpreters became an effective mechanism to build a good relationship and avoid causing unnecessary harm. Although issues discussed during the interviews could have caused some emotional distress, none of the participants reported to me any psychological harm/distress during or after the interview process.

Using organisation staff to recruit participants for my research raised concerns about the potential for participants to feel coerced as a result of requests to participate or pressure to do so. I did not want them to participate in interviews due to any implicit or explicit obligation or pressure and so I ensured their voluntary participation by informing them of their right to accept or decline participation. Furthermore, I asked staff and volunteers not to pressure any ASRs or their colleagues to participate in this research.

Moreover, ASRs were informed that this research would not affect their access to services, while staff were informed that it would not affect their position in the service providing organisations. I also ensured that participants understood that the research was being conducted solely for the purpose of PhD studies and would not have any influence on their services. However, I disclosed to participants that research findings would be used to inform practice and policy on social protection.

Research participants' rights to privacy and confidentiality were ensured throughout the research process. The primary researcher was the only person to view personal information collected as part of this research, and participants were assigned pseudonyms. However, anonymising the details of staff from service providing organisations became a challenge. Since those who participated represented prominent TSOs in Glasgow, any information about the location or official designation could identify them. Therefore, I ensured that names and locations of the organisations and their official designations would not be included in any quotes. I also explained how sensitive data would be handled and stored. Data was managed and stored according to EHU's data management protocols and GDPR requirements.

During the fieldwork, I observed that asylum seekers seemed anxious about disclosing information regarding their uncertain asylum status and the anticipated impacts of this status on their lives. Therefore, I stressed that I had no affiliations and no intention of sharing their information with authorities. To mitigate ASRs' anxiety over potential repercussions, I requested assistance from TSOs that would encourage ASRs to endorse this research. This was not only the case for ASRs but also for a few participants representing service

providing organisations; therefore, adequate information was provided to build their confidence in my research. Importantly, the imperative of ‘do no harm’ guided my process; interviews were conducted only once potential participants had had the process explained and they understood the informed consent process.

Finally, interpreters’ involvement in research may pose a threat to confidentiality (Turner and Fozdar, 2010; Block et al., 2013; Davenport, 2017). Even though participants gave informed consent, the presence of another person such as an interpreter could cause discomfort or hesitation. To address this ethical concern, interpreters were informed about the importance of confidentiality and the need to protect the participants and they signed a confidentiality agreement before providing their service. I felt confident that the interpreters I used were trustworthy and would act professionally since they had previously participated in similar research projects and their familiarity with the process minimised potential issues stemming from their involvement.

4.7.1. Reflexivity and positionality

Knowledge is always ‘socially situated’, thus never ‘value-neutral’ (Gray et al., 2007: 223). Researchers, as members of the wider society, cannot detach themselves from values they hold, and so they are not value-free individuals. A researcher should be accountable for their positionality because one’s positionality can affect and influence approaches and interpretations in research. According to Haraway (1988), social science research should adhere to the principles of transparency (accountable positioning), which requires reflexivity; this involves being mindful and not making assumptions or generalisations.

This research is inevitably shaped by my own personal experiences, which have affected the research process in different ways. As a foreigner in an unfamiliar social context, my observations were unique. During the fieldwork I noticed that being from a country outside the UK helped me with approaching ASRs, interviewing them, gaining their trust, building rapport, and initiating

discussions. For instance, a simple conversation about the experience of cold weather in Glasgow helped to establish a connection for a deeper conversation to happen. Being from outside the UK and thus feeling a 'stranger' myself enabled my participants and me to connect. Giddens (1990) expresses that these fragile associations and the capacity for their reflexive monitoring are important stages of a research process.

Qualitative researchers position themselves as either insiders or outsiders (Breen, 2007). In my research, however, my position was liminal since I was neither completely an insider, nor entirely an outsider. I was an outsider in relation to the field setting and ASRs, and an insider as a non-British expatriate, which had several advantages, disadvantages and implications for power relations. In most of the cases, my positionality instilled confidence in participants that as a researcher, I could understand aspects of their situation. On several occasions, people assumed I was a migrant rather than a doctoral researcher because of my name, which is atypical in the UK context, my accent as an English-third-language speaker and my South-Asian ethnic traits. On one occasion, when visiting an organisation, a Sri Lankan Tamil recognised me as Sri Lankan and approached me. Early in our conversation, he asked, 'Did you claim asylum?'. I was not surprised to be asked this question since many Sri Lankans have claimed asylum in the UK because of the civil war in Sri Lanka. On another occasion, when I entered an organisation during a drop-in hour, a volunteer thought I was there for support and welcomed me. This individual immediately pointed out the person who was issuing dry ration tokens to ASRs and asked me to register my name and collect a token.

However, my visible ethnic characteristics at times undermined my authority as a researcher. Coming from outside the UK created disadvantages because ASRs were not always interested in talking to someone who was not helping them or who were, like them, in a migrant position (someone who is not settled in the UK). There were also cultural barriers; most ASRs preferred to interact with someone sharing their own nationality, race or religion. In particular, gender played a significant role in building relationships during fieldwork. I harboured concerns about how my gender might affect the

recruitment of women ASRs for this study. I considered that women may feel wary of or be reluctant to engage with men who were strangers. For that reason, I requested the support of female volunteers and staff in the organisations to approach the asylum-seeking and refugee women and this reduced the challenges. In addition, having female interpreters helped to overcome the challenges associated with gender.

Overall, my reflexivity enabled me to view the topic of this research with a fresh perspective. Adopting a reflexive position helped me to consider the impacts of social and political identities in research design including data collection and analysis. Significantly, reflexivity allowed me to critically reflect on the production of knowledge during the fieldwork. A key lesson learned from being reflexive was that I should be aware of my thoughts and actions as a researcher.

4.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the qualitative research methodology applied to examine ASRs' perceptions and experiences of social protection in Glasgow. The choice to employ a qualitative design was informed by my aim to explore and examine the perspectives and experiences of ASRs. It was also guided by the research questions. Having chosen to use a qualitative interpretivist approach, my research design needed to give attention to overcoming the logistical issues of gaining access to refugee populations. This issue of how to gain access to participants and earn their trust as a researcher was an important early consideration. My experience confirmed that some aspects of the design process of a qualitative study can emerge during fieldwork. To gain access to the research population, I had to apply different techniques to approach asylum seekers, refugees and service providers. The challenges encountered in recruiting participants were time-consuming. However, understanding the research context and population helped to overcome this challenge. In particular, my personal volunteering became a key technique as it enabled me to be present in the target population's environment, mix with them and build the trust and rapport that facilitated participants' recruitment.

A key lesson learned from this project was that a researcher should consider research participants' socio-cultural contexts. I was able to gain access to their social world only after understanding their ways of life in Glasgow. This particular aspect required me to understand the complexities and opportunities of being a researcher, especially the context of insider/outsider positionalities. Furthermore, I had to be mindful of methodological challenges and ethical concerns involved in researching ASRs. Using semi-structured interviews and observation to learn more about ASRs and staff from service providing organisations were effective in this research. Interviews brought first-hand experiences and views of ASRs in Glasgow.

Throughout my fieldwork journey, from the beginning to end, I experienced ups and downs, which were all part of a research process. Fieldwork was complicated by the subject matter, linguistic differences, a new and unfamiliar location, and the targeted population (ASRs). However, a good relationship with ASRs and TSOs, mutual trust and respect and time spent in TSOs contributed to successful fieldwork. Overall, the qualitative approach and data collections methods I adopted were suited to this research, as they focused on meanings and interpretations of my research participants. In particular, the qualitative approach helped me to place myself within my participants' social context or environment, which allowed me to examine their experiences in their social context.

5. Experiences of Formal and Informal Social Protection

This chapter explores ASRs' experiences of four key formal social protection services: housing, financial benefits, education and healthcare. ASRs are more prone to vulnerabilities and risks than the general population, and therefore they require social protection 'to ensure that they can adequately manage their risks' in their new host societies (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011: 91). Although social protection is available, ASRs face challenges in its access; they therefore assemble different elements to access social protection. Each section in this chapter identifies and explores significant challenges and experiences that ASRs faced in regard to each formal service. Then, specific aspects of their experiences are been identified to investigate how ASRs have been utilising different forms of social protection to facilitate their access to formal support. Applying a lens of social protection assemblages, this chapter reveals the complex yet crucial navigation mechanisms that ASRs used to access those formal services. This approach further revealed that ASRs combine formal, informal and semi-formal forms of social protection to achieve their overall social protection. ASRs' engagement with social protection assemblages especially highlights the ways that they have been resisting the state control and continue to find ways to survive on a daily basis as newcomers.

5.1. Asylum accommodation and social housing

Housing is crucial for ASRs' effective long-term settlement and integration (Phillips, 2006). Housing is key to ensuring asylum seekers' social protection, since individuals arriving in a new place have an immediate need for housing (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman, 2011). Finding and settling into good quality accommodation is necessary for life rebuilding. The findings of this study confirmed existing findings in relation to asylum housing and experiences of asylum seekers. However, as studies suggest, asylum seekers are accommodated in inappropriate and sub-standard houses in Glasgow (Phillips, 2006; Netto, 2011b; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). Most participants noted promptly when interviewed that the accommodation

provided to them was ‘sub-standard’, using words such as ‘dirty’ or ‘very dirty’ and ‘awful’ to describe what they encountered when occupying a property, regardless of accommodation type. Alongside criticism of housing quality, many participants commented on inadequate provision of household items (furniture and utensils) and continuous house changes throughout the asylum process (Phillips, 2006; Dwyer and Brown, 2008; Netto, 2011a). Moreover, as also highlighted in other studies, asylum seeking participants feared that complaining about the standards of housing could lead to their removal from accommodation or result in them receiving poorer support; thus, they preferred to avoid confrontation or creating tension with housing providers and not risk repercussions. The following examples corroborate findings of other studies:

> The house was not in the best condition; some lights were not working. [It was a] really old house and the water would drip down from the second floor. It was so bad, especially the bathroom was a disaster (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25).

> My fear in complaining about the bed was getting even a worse bed. So I didn’t bring it up. I doubted that they would bring something in the end. Even if they would [bring a replacement bed], there is a chance that it would be worse than [the current bed] I have got right now. So, I am not going to report it and will leave it as it is (Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45).

While this thesis corroborates the existing findings, two aspects of the asylum accommodation process emerged as significant and problematic: the state of permanent temporariness and situational angst (cohabitation in the asylum accommodation). Asylum seeking participants considered themselves to be in a state of ‘permanent temporariness’ due to ambiguity over time spent in ‘temporary’ accommodations and disruptive location changes. Bailey et al (2002: 139) highlight permanent temporariness as a ‘static experience of being temporary’ and ‘acquired knowledge that such temporariness is permanent’. The perceived status of ‘permanent temporariness’ when mentioned was usually linked to time spent in asylum accommodation. Although the extended period spent in asylum accommodation linked with the protracted asylum process of the UK government, the findings of this study links the time spent in asylum accommodation to participants’ view of being

stuck in a permanent temporary position. Namazzi (F, AS, Uganda, 30–35) stated:

> I moved [to dispersal accommodation] in 2012 November and it's going to be 6 years [that I have lived there] soon. Well, it's temporary until you get your status resolved but at the moment [it is] sort of like permanent.

Although, as mentioned, initial accommodation is meant to house asylum seekers temporarily and for a maximum of 19 days[9], this is not always the case. Indeed, many participants shared experiences of remaining in initial accommodation exceeding the maximum period, some by days, but for others, it was weeks to months (see Table 3).

Zahir (M, AS, Iraq, 25–30)	2 months
Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45)	3 months
Fabunni (M, AS, Namibia, 30–35)	3 months
Adiel (M, AS, Namibia, 35–40)	4 months

***Table 3**: Time spent in initial accommodation*

As was the case with protracted time in dispersal accommodation, participants stayed in dispersal accommodation often for extended periods of time spanning months to years (see Table 4). Length of stay in dispersal accommodation depends on the asylum application decisions. At the time of interview, multiple participants were awaiting a decision on their asylum application. Participants who had already received their refugee status reported of living for more than a year in the dispersal accommodation while awaiting the decision on their asylum claim.

Babar (Male, AS, Pakistan, 30–35)	8 years
Namazzi (F, AS, Uganda, 30–35)	6 years
Jamshed (M, R, Iran, 45–50)	5 years

[9] According to the Home Office COMPASS guidelines, initial accommodation is meant to house asylum seekers temporarily and only for a maximum of 19 days or two to three weeks.

Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35-40)	4 years
Muhammed (M, R, Eritrea, 35–40)	2 years and 9 months
Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45)	2 years and 4 months

***Table 4**: Time spent in dispersal accommodation*

In addition to the length of stay in asylum accommodation, participants considered the asylum housing process as permanent temporariness due to the disruptive housing changes. Further to the various lengths of stay in initial and dispersal accommodation, every participant interviewed had been moved to different houses during the asylum process. As mentioned, participants stayed between 8 to 10 weeks on average in initial accommodation before eventually being moved to dispersal accommodation.

Moving between houses meant more than just transferring personal belongings; in most cases, it involved and affected an asylum seeker's access to social protection elements such as education, healthcare, food banks, friends, local networks and access to the city centre. For example, asylum seekers must change their GP registration, establish new social networks in the new locality and find new charities for accessing food banks. In particular, relocation added significant stress and affected participants with school-aged children, because when moving, they may need to change their children's schools, which is difficult. On the other hand, if they could not change the school, it caused logistical challenges (time, transport and caring duties). Furthermore, participants were often required or forced to move without adequate notice; hence, the process was rushed and they were unprepared to move. Consequently, participants reported leaving behind their household items, including food, which had often been acquired through charities. As Dalilah stated:

> I need to move everything. I need to change my GP, my dentist and schools. This is very difficult for me and for my kids. Every time I have to collect all my things and move to another place (Dalilah - F, AS, Egypt, 30–35).

As the findings presented above show, there is variability in terms of time spent in accommodation and vulnerabilities linked to relocation, with ASRs

experiencing a higher logistic and emotional burden. Time spent in asylum accommodation was an important factor influencing how ASRs interpreted their housing process as a state of permanent temporariness; although the UK government indicates that a decision will be taken within 6 months of application, participants spent years and years awaiting it (Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan, 2010). This highlights the different degrees of state control over asylum seekers' housing and settlement process (Phillips, 2006). Their temporary housing has been a daily reminder of temporariness, uncertainty, inability to ensure an effective settlement and foster rebuilding a successful life. O'Reilly (2018) emphasises a similar view in her research about asylum seekers in Ireland.

Furthermore, a significant finding of this research was that sharing a space and living with another asylum seeker often triggered tensions between the occupants. Cohabitation is more problematic for many participants due to social and cultural living conditions in their countries of origin, where they lived in private houses and only with immediate family members who are often from similar ethnic and religious background. However, in the UK, they had to live with others, and often the allocation of asylum accommodation has not given regard to religious or ethnic differences and housed asylum seekers in a mixture of people from various backgrounds. Amina (F, R, Sudan, 40–45) stated:

> I came from a background where I used to have a very wide big house like 400 [m^2] and a room for everyone in the house. Separate living rooms for men and women. However, here lots of people live in narrow and small places. So when you come here, you don't have any other options.

As a result, participants developed situational angst over their living conditions. In this case, the angst occurred due to their specific spatial and interpersonal circumstances in asylum accommodation; within this environment asylum seekers felt frustration over the lack of autonomy in their daily life and routines.

Many participants were particularly frustrated with sharing accommodation and overcrowding. While dispersal accommodation houses mostly two singles

or a family, initial accommodation normally includes four or five asylum seekers and widely criticised for overcrowding. Dispersal accommodation could be seen as less problematic because most of the participants shared their flat/house only with another asylum seeker. However, it became problematic when they were required to share a small flat with inadequate space.

Having a flatmate often created problems and tensions in terms of sharing the facilities (kitchen, lavatory and living room) with a stranger. One issue that participants raised was that whoever went to the living room or kitchen first monopolised that space; as a result, others were unable to use it until it becomes available. It was a struggle for those who cook at their accommodation because sometimes they had to wait two to three hours until the other resident finished cooking. Consequently, participants were annoyed and frustrated about being unable to cook and eat at their leisure. Not having access to the kitchen and other spaces whenever they want to use them was seen as having a lack of control over their life.

> [Cohabiting] is a huge problem. I need to cook and eat on time because I have a daily routine but [if my flatmate] goes to the kitchen, he cooks for hours and hours. [I think], come on man, you are not the only one in this house. So cook faster and give [over] the space. Even if I hint that I want to use the kitchen, he will never leave. It messes up my daily food routine. Sometimes, I got angry but I cannot do anything [about it] (Zahir - M, AS, Iraq, 25–30).

Cohabitation often raised issues owing to differing hygiene practices. In their countries of origin, participants reported following specific hygiene practices especially when it comes to the kitchen, toilet and bathroom. For example, some have routines like washing, wiping and putting dishes and utensils away immediately after cooking, and cleaning the toilet regularly. There was an expectation that flatmates would follow similar hygienic practices. However, deciding who, when and how to use and clean facilities caused misunderstandings and disputes among asylum seekers.

> I am a clean freak… I need everything to be clean and tidy, especially the bathroom and kitchen because they are full of germs. So, I do a full cleaning every week. The person living in

> my house [with me] never cleans things properly. I don't think he even bothers to use the toilet brush to scrub any stains. It is so annoying if I find the kitchen or bathroom unclean when I go to use them (Takudzwa - M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45).

Furthermore, participants felt restricted in relation to performing daily routines. A few participants spoke about how flatmates affected their sleeping habits. One issue was the playing of music. As Bokamoso (M, AS, Namibia, 30–35) explained,

> I cannot sleep without playing music on my phone. It helps me to sleep, but [my flatmate] used to complain [to me] saying, 'my friend, I am sleeping. Reduce the sound of the music a bit'.

Therefore, the more disparity between individuals (whether personal or cultural) the more participants felt a lack of control over their daily routines. While participants felt restricted in relation to their ability to perform daily routines, the cultural and identity differences between people sharing accommodation also appeared to have created tensions around freedom and privacy. Cohabitants typically came from different countries and disparities in terms of race, culture, language, religion, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation and habits were considered barriers to their freedom and privacy. Mostly, participants reported being uncomfortable due to religious and race differences. Some believed that living with a person from another religion was unacceptable and constituted disrespecting their God and religious devotion. This was a particular issue for Muslim and Christian asylum seekers:

> You cannot put a Christian with a Muslim. We are not the same in our beliefs (Fabunni - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

Additionally, those who followed Islamic rituals reported feeling a loss of freedom regarding their religious practice. Islamic rituals became problematic for non-Islamic residents when Muslims played their prayer audios loudly. Religious differences created significant complications regardless of asylum seekers' common characteristics such as their country of origin and spoken language. One participant who follows Christianity talked about his experiences of sharing a flat with another asylum seeker (a Muslim) from Pakistan. Although both were from Pakistan and could communicate in Urdu,

they avoided conversing and requested a change of accommodation due to their religious difference. These examples highlight religious tensions between Christians and Muslims regardless of their other common characteristics.

Situational angst caused by varying attitudes, behaviours, personal and cultural differences between those cohabiting in asylum accommodation affected individuals' wellbeing and ability to adapt in the new environment. In particular, this situation links with the UK government's ignorance of individual cultural and social characteristics when dispersing asylum seekers around the UK. Hynes and Sales (2010: 53) are critical of the 'one size fits all' dispersal and housing process stemming from the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, which disregards individual histories and characteristics of asylum seekers. The issues of living with a stranger might have been avoided by placing together individuals from similar background. Nevertheless, not all asylum seekers are preferred to stay with others from their origin countries (Netto, 2011b).

While the period of asylum housing was reported to be negative, transition from asylum seeking to refugee status was perceived to be associated with more positive opportunities including permanent accommodation; nevertheless, the refugee accommodation process increased pressure on participants. Once asylum seekers have received their refugee status, they have two routes to permanent accommodation: to apply directly to social housing providers, or present as homeless to GCC. Refugees then go through a homelessness assessment and GCC refer them to social housing associations. The way the homelessness accommodation process works – making newly recognised refugees become literally homeless to get social housing – was viewed by participants as forcing homelessness upon them. Once they have received their status, refugees must inform GCC and prepare to move out of the asylum accommodation within 28 days (the move-on period). Refugees who endured the hostile asylum process were keen to vacate the sub-standard asylum housing.

Even though, technically, asylum seekers became independent once they received their refugee status, the homelessness housing process still

controlled their ability to find suitable houses on time and movements. In the homeless process, newly recognised refugees were moved to temporary accommodation around Glasgow by GCC based on the availability of houses, a process in which participants did not have a say in terms of location, type of houses, facilities, etc. Many participants compared this with their asylum process and called homeless housing another form of dispersal. Moving to different locations significantly disrupted their normal routine and affected their access to formal and informal social protection (discussed more in detail in Chapter 6).

> You don't have a choice for the house. You go anywhere they say. They will send you anywhere. You just have to take [what you are given] (Flora - F, R, Cameroon, 35–40).

The negative associations of being homeless and a lack of control raised questions such as why GCC asked refugees to continue to stay in the asylum accommodation, why they were not given the opportunity to start the permanent house process from day one, why GCC forced refugees to become homeless, why refugees need to go to homeless accommodation when they have 28 days to find a permanent house and so on. These questions highlighted the systematic and bureaucratic shortfall in providing social housing for newly recognised refugees in Glasgow. Netto (2011b) also highlights about the feelings of powerlessness and lack of control experienced by refugees when going through the homeless application process.

> [GCC] interviewed me and said that I have to come back on the day [the asylum housing provider] asked you to leave, from the day you become homeless. So when you leave the house, you are homeless (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

Nonetheless, when it comes to their permanent social housing, every refugee participant had different expectations about their future house in Glasgow. The permanent housing process and length of stay in temporary GCC accommodation was influenced by participants' demands and expectations. It has been generally, widely reported that refugees face problems in finding a suitable house with adequate space for family members, are unable to exercise their choices and meet expectations for their future house and location and have no choice other than to accept the first housing offered (for

example, see Netto, 2011b; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). Although participants' expectations (e.g., space, location and facilities) might seem excessively demanding to GCC, such demands reflect refugees' social protection needs. Since they have to become independent after receiving refugee status, refugees must think about how to access mainstream service providers easily (e.g. GPs and schools/colleges) and consider the need to stay within the close proximity of informal networks.

Firstly, most of the participants assumed that living in or close to the city centre was the best option. Some preferred living in or near the city centre because all the services and organisations could be easily accessible. In particular, refugees not only needed proximity to statutory service providers but also to TSOs for their survival. Many of them depended on organisations such as SRC, PAiH and BRC, which are situated in the city centre. Refugees felt there was more opportunity to participate in integration activities in the city centre. Furthermore, proximity to the city centre was also linked to acceptance. For example, Amina (F, R, Sudan, 40–45) stated: *'here in the city centre people are very different. They accept foreigners more than people in other areas'.* Similarly, many participants said that there were more opportunities to meet and build social networks in the city centre, and therefore hoped to have a house in the city centre or somewhere within walking distance. Amina further explained:

> Refugees want to find friends, and you can find friends and a lot of people from your nationality and from your background in the city centre more than in far [away] places … This is the thing that you feel that you need – [connection with] people from your nationality (Amina - F, R, Sudan, 40–45).

Secondly, while some participants desired accommodation in the city centre, others expressed interest in finding a house in the same location as they were housed in during their asylum process. During their time in asylum housing, ASRs registered with a GP, established social networks, identified and used easily accessible shops for their daily needs and used support from TSOs. However, asylum accommodation relocations interrupted their access to existing services. Participants suggested a sense of attachment to their locality, places where they had volunteering opportunities within

organisations. Their attachment was also shaped by their previous experiences of accessing key services. The protracted asylum process provided opportunities for them to establish strong networks and maintain close contacts with local charities. Therefore, they hoped to find permanent social housing in the same area.

> I lived in Parkhead when I was an asylum seeker. Parkhead is my place I love Parkhead. I can find everything in Parkhead: transport, shopping centre. In Parkhead, everything is easier (Danso - M, R, Congo, 35–40).

The desire to find a house in the location where they lived during their asylum process was predominant in families with school-aged children. During their asylum process, children were enrolled in a school within close proximity of their dispersal accommodations. Refugees who were parents did not want to disrupt their children's education and social experiences by moving them to a different school. Children had already established their own social network in schools and relocating would be detrimental to them. Participants' accounts suggested that this was the only scenario when refugees were not intent on finding a house in the city centre. According to Akifa (F, R, Sudan, 25–30):

> The challenge is the area where I chose to live because I have children and I want a house close to their school. The problem is there is no such house available at the moment. So, if these houses are full, it is difficult to find houses in this place and I have to wait.

Although participants had their desires and expectation of living a good life, their demands and expectations translated into a long waiting time to find permanent social housing. However, participants' expectations emphasised the importance of different forms of social protection for their survival and wellbeing. In addition, their expectations were also shaped by the fact that they utilised other forms of social protection to facilitate their access and fill gaps within housing provision.

In the housing process, ASRs engaged in social protection assemblages in two areas. Firstly, refugees sought and received help from their informal network to navigate through the housing system. Encountering bureaucratic blockades when securing permanent social housing led participants to take

drastic measures. As many participants noted, asylum seekers preferred not to remain in asylum accommodation once they had received their refugee status. Therefore, some participants took unconventional action, such as manipulating and providing false information about their asylum accommodation. For instance, when Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) spoke about GCC's request for him to stay in the asylum accommodation and return on the last day, he was told by another refugee to be deceitful:

> Someone told me to go to the [GCC] office and lie and tell them that [the asylum house provider] kicked me out. [I went to GCC and] I said, they told me that this is the last day and I am not allowed to stay there anymore. Then [GCC] took me to a hotel.

In this case, Danso's social network guided him as to how to get into the homeless housing system without waiting until the last day of asylum accommodation. Although not condonable, participants took such unconventional approaches to progress, because they needed to meet their needs especially when they considered the period of their life spent in the asylum system as 'lost time' and felt eager to move on with their lives (see Chapter 6).

Second, in the meantime, both asylum seekers and refugees faced a significant issue, which required them to seek support from others. A general criticism about the housing provision was associated with the provision of household items (utensils, furniture and equipment). Some participants reported having inadequate resources inside the house while a few of them commented that '*the house was empty'* and *'I had nothing'*. Participants thus engaged in social protection assemblages through actively combining semi-formal and informal forms to fulfil their needs. A few participants received assistance through drawing on their social connections to fulfil their housing needs. When asked, Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35–40) stated:

> The house was empty. I had nothing but friends gave me carpets, furniture, plates, tables, everything. My friends gave things to me. I didn't have anything. [Without] friends, I would not able to find anything. And I know many people are saying they can't find anything for their house; they can't buy carpet, or chairs because that money, housing benefit is for your rent and the job seekers allowance is just for your food.

In addition to the support received from friends, although TSOs cannot get directly involved in asylum and refugee accommodation, throughout their housing process, participants used TSOs to source household items and access services. As highlighted in Chapter 3, TSOs play a significant gap-filling role in providing additional support to ASRs (Mayblin and James, 2019). Findings indicated that participants collected essential items such as bedding, cutlery and furniture through assistance from TSOs. Mustafa (M, AS, Iraq, 40–45) explained:

> We just try to get things [chair, table and cutlery], furniture from other people [charities] but not from them [housing provider] because they give us nothing.

Further to household items, once a week, Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45) who referring to lack of access to facilities, said that he used the washing machine in a charity in Govan:

> There is no washing machine [in my flat]. There is [a] shared washing machine; one for two buildings but [the washing machine is] in a different building. It is a huge problem when there is no washing machine in my building. So, I come to [the charity] and use their washing machine.

Participants' use of and reliance upon TSOs for provisions indicated the presence of semi-formal social protection mechanisms. Although TSOs are one of the formal social protection providers, they have not been funded to provide household items to ASRs. Therefore, financial and material donations (e.g. furniture and household items) were collected from individuals within the community and distributed among asylum seekers in need. As Devereux (2015) notes, individual donors are unable to distribute their donations directly to ASRs and so they require the involvement of TSOs with the capacity and skills to do it. Additionally, TSOs cannot be directly involved in housing provision nor provide household items; thus, they require support from public or local community members (informal networks). This position represents the semi-formal social protection element. Overall, ASRs' combination of informal and semi-formal forms of support to fill the gap shows the presence of social protection assemblages.

The above section has discussed ASRs' housing experiences. While literature exists on the topic of housing and ASRs (see, for example, Phillips, 2006, Hickman, Crowley and Mai, 2008, Allsopp, Sigona and Phillimore, 2014), the findings of this study further expand upon how structural issues have contributed to negative housing experiences, such as sub-standard housing, inadequate provision of household items and has facilitated situational angst. Not everyone had access to suitable accommodation and encountered various issues, regardless of their immigration status. Nonetheless, ASRs have been engaging in social protection assemblages to address certain gaps. TSOs' form, as semi-formal providers, plays a crucial role in assisting ASRs achieve their needs. As noted in Chapter 3 and also suggested by scholars, for ASRs, living in suitable and adequate housing is a significant part of social protection and an indicator of successful integration (Sabates-Wheeler and Waite, 2003; Ager and Strang, 2008). However, their housing experiences were challenging and the process was arbitrary and not considerate of ASRs' aspirations to settle and integrate into the life of the city. Despite the objective factors, like shortage of accommodation, the housing process posed several challenges on ASRs and their families, which have long-lasting effects on their strategies of social protection and social inclusion.

ASRs' experience of financial benefits is discussed in the next section, highlighting financial differences according to their immigration status.

5.2. Enforced destitution (asylum allowance) and social benefits

ASRs' everyday survival depends on the level of financial support provided through the weekly asylum allowance and financial benefits. Asylum seekers receive a limited asylum allowance, while refugees are entitled to access all the mainstream benefits of an ordinary citizen. Within this section, asylum seekers' experiences of financial support will be analysed, with a focus on the impacts of a limited asylum allowance and how they overcome these challenges. Then, the discussion moves toward the experiences of transitioning from the asylum support system to a mainstream welfare system. Lastly, I will discuss the key bureaucratic dilemmas faced by refugees and the ways they have addressed them.

Financial support for asylum seekers means that they do not need to pay for accommodation or utility bills but they need some money for their everyday encounters. Asylum allowance being £37.75, however, caused frustration and humiliation as participants struggled to address their basic needs; thus, it was considered as enforced destitution imposed upon them. Scholars maintain that state-enforced destitution is a key UK immigration policy outcome to disincentivize asylum seekers (Crawley, Hemmings and Price, 2011). Significantly, it could be observed that the weekly allowance (£37.75) paid to asylum seekers was well below the UK government's 50% income support for persons with low income which is equivalent to £74.35 (UK Government, 2020). According to participants, limited asylum allowance challenged asylum seekers' capacity to buy food items, especially their ability to buy products appropriate for their cultural (halal) or ideological beliefs (vegan). The allowance was inadequate to meet their demand for clothing and toiletries and public transport costs to carry out their daily activities. Similar findings have been highlighted in studies such as Griffiths, Sigona and Zetter (2005); Patil et al. (2010); Crawley, Hemmings and Price (2011). Here, the following narratives express participants' frustration:

> I don't call it [asylum allowance] benefits; I call it an insult. It is like insulting people because if you give me £35 now, it will be spent within five hours. Then how do I survive? (Takudzwa - M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45).

> If I want to go to the city centre, I cannot take a bus because you have to pay £1.60 [one way]. So, what happens is that I just walk to the city centre and come back walking and I try to leave that [weekly allowance] for food only (Abdo - M, AS, Sudan, 30–35).

In addition to the previously mentioned issues, two aspects of asylum seekers' experiences of inadequate asylum allowance stood out: managing the expenses of mobile phones and recreational activities. During the interviews, it emerged that mobile phones became essential for asylum seekers to navigate their new environment. Mainly mobile phones were necessary to communicate with statutory service providers and the TSOs to

ask for support, follow up and book appointments. For instance, Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) stated: *'I just called* [the dentist] *and booked an appointment over the phone then I walked in for my dental treatment'.* Even though some service providers allowed individuals to visit in person and book appointments (e.g. GPs), participants could not always manage to go in person due it being time-consuming and owing to transport costs.

Furthermore, mobile communication was the key method to keep in touch with local and transnational families, friends and social networks. It should be noted that internet-based applications such as WhatsApp, Viber and Facebook have become popular methods for communication via chat boxes or internet calls. To use these options participants must have a secure internet connection. They could not always depend on free Wi-Fi connections in the libraries or other places. Therefore, a small amount of money was allocated from their weekly allowance to keep the internet active, regardless of their need to spend it on food and subsistence. Takudzwa (M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45) shared an example of the importance of his mobile phone:

> I could check on meetups and what's going on Glasgow. If there is an event or something I just turn up. I just go there [social networking]. You also know your network of people; if anything happens to you, you just make one call or a few, you will get some help [informal social protection].

Many participants reported having used mobile phone internet to move around Glasgow and for translation purposes, with the help of Google Maps and Google Translate; for example, to translate the contents of a letter in English especially when they could not find anyone to translate for them. During the data collection, I also had a first-hand experience of using Google Translate to communicate with a potential participant. During my research participant recruitment period, I went to a charity in Gorbals to share my research and to recruit participants. A refugee asked about my research and used the Google Translate to type questions in Arabic and translated them into English. Likewise, I typed my responses in English and translated them into Arabic. Participants' narratives and my first-hand experience highlighted the importance of mobile phones. Subsequently, mobile top-ups became an essential expense spent from participants' asylum allowance: As one

participant said, *'I have to save £5 per week to top-up my phone'* (Fabunni - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

While there are studies highlighting the cost and impact associated with food and transport, there is a lack of consideration for asylum seekers' ability to afford and to engage in recreational activities. Engaging in recreational activities or opportunities to relax and for entertainment contributes to maintaining sound mental health (Stack and Iwasaki, 2009; Hurly, 2019). I conducted the interview with Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) in a coffee shop in Glasgow city centre. I bought cups of tea for us both. Later, when we talked about the asylum allowance, she pointed to the teacups and said:

> [Asylum seekers] would also like to have a cup of tea or coffee with friends or alone in Cafe Nero, Starbucks, or Costa but we cannot afford to do it.

When further asked, Aleea criticised the Home Office saying:

> They [Home Office] don't pay £35 for one day, they pay £35 for one week and expect you to live on £35. And don't we like other stuff like having meals with friends or going to the cinema?.

She explained further:

> If you buy a cup of tea/coffee outside it is £2.50 or £3.50. That is more than half of my daily allowance. So, think about the food cost and imagine how people are living with this financial support.

Several participants considered that engaging in entertainment activities could help to relax and relieve anxiety about asylum struggles. Takudzwa (M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45) wished to go to the cinema, watch live performances, football matches and attend events with his friends. However, access to entertainment was restricted because participants could not afford to pay for movies or shows or spend money on drinks during social gatherings. For some, limited asylum allowance created a perception of asylum seekers being freeloaders or depending on others during social meetings with friends or others. Even though there were limited opportunities to socialise or relax, feelings of shame associated with their inability to spend money created negative experiences for the participants.

> Where to go for entertainment? … I also want to get out and do stuff. It makes me uncomfortable when people say ‘don’t worry, I will pay for this’ ... I don’t want to live like that. If I go out, I would [like to] be able to buy a glass of Coca-Cola or something like that (Samuel - M, AS, Canada, 40–45).

Asylum-seekers’ narratives already presented have demonstrated the destitute situation that many asylum seekers in Glasgow face. Asylum seekers are not allowed work nor are they eligible for mainstream benefits; thus, they depend solely on weekly asylum allowance. Participants saw themselves scraping by for several weeks or a couple of months but were critical about the weekly allowance for asylum seekers in the long run. This situation has caused frustration due to asylum seekers’ inability or lack of capacity to fulfil their basic daily needs. This particular situation was seen as something degrading and creating a situation of not being in control and being unable to have a normal life; participants considered their situation as a form of enforced destitution.

Simultaneously, the analysis identified a few key survival mechanisms that asylum seekers used to overcome financial barriers or the ways they resist government control over them: *making sacrifices, depending on charities and volunteering*. Primarily, making sacrifices had been a way for asylum seekers to survive with inadequate financial support, which is also highlighted in other research (Patil et al., 2010; Sampson, Gifford and Taylor, 2016)**.** This is also case with any families with inadequate income regardless of their immigration status (Walsh et al., 2019; Dryland, Carroll and Gallegos, 2020).

Asylum seeking participants used charities as a sole source for food products and/or to top-up their available food items. In Glasgow, many charities and integration networks provide food products weekly that include dry rations (pasta, beans, bread and canned fish) and fresh items (fruits and vegetables). Food banks helped participants in two significant ways. Firstly, participants were able, at least partially, to fulfil their daily food intake. Secondly, food banks helped to cut down their food expenses and provided an opportunity to save money or use it for other needs, such as transportation costs and mobile phone top-ups.

> We couldn't manage on £20 [after using £10–£15 for other expenses]. If we buy from the market or from other supermarkets, we couldn't manage. So, we get everything from a charity (Mustafa - M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

> We registered our names at Unity[10] [a charity in Glasgow]. Every Monday … we used to go there and get a voucher for food. Then we take that voucher to a church and get our food (Bokamoso - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

Indeed, there is existing literature that emphasises asylum seekers' dependency on foodbanks for their food security in the UK and other host countries (for example, Randall, 2015; Mayblin and James, 2019). Considering the extended role of charities and faith-based organisations, it can be said that TSOs play a supplementary semi-formal role to fill the gaps left by the limited formal support and informal networks. Although TSOs fall within the category of a formal social protection provider, in the case of foodbanks, charities depend on public donations. For example:

> The public are good with us. We always have donations; we always have something from people. As part of our main service we provide clothing and household goods as well. We provide some food when we can get it as we provide through donations (Tan – Charity shop).

> People often call us for donations. We have the capacity to collect all the donation given to us and give them out to people (Beth, Charity – Household support).

Nevertheless, a key finding of this study was that dependence on foodbanks also limited participants' choices because they had to choose from the available stock and sometimes all the necessary food items could not be found. This reminded me of a short casual conversation I had with an asylum seeker who visited the Glasgow City Church during their weekly food bank. In the midst of distribution, an asylum seeker approached me and asked, *'do you have tuna?'* and I replied no. He was disappointed and said*, 'I am looking for [canned] tuna. My son likes it. I looked in other charities and they also said no.*

[10] See Appendix A7

I got [baked] beans so he can eat beans' (Field note: 14.06.2018). For another example:

> I was going to food banks and stuff even though I was not getting the regular [vegan-friendly] food, the stuff I regularly eat, but I am still getting some food (Samuel - M, AS, Canada, 40–45).

Though asylum seekers collected dry rations from food banks, not all of them had resources to prepare their home-cooked meal. Takudzwa (M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45) questioned*, 'how can a person who has not got a house be able to cook food? So, it does not make sense'.* This was particularly a challenge for those living in initial asylum accommodations, such as hostels, hotels, and bed and breakfast where there were no kitchen facilities. Those who preferred to eat home-cooked meals could not cook, though they managed to collect free food items. As a result, they had to depend on bread, peanut butter, jam or other ready-made items.

As well as accessing food, participants relied on charities for clothes, toiletries and other household items. Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) stated:

> Upon my arrival, I didn't have any clothes. After five days, I went to Serco and said I don't have clothes. I asked them where I can buy cheap clothes. My housing officer told me to go to Maslows. So, I went there I was so shy and embarrassed to ask people for clothes and things but I needed them because I didn't have clothes to change [into].

In many cases, asking others for clothing and toiletries was considered begging, lowered their self-worth and caused them embarrassment. Therefore, they hesitated to ask for support to get food items and additional clothes. Being forced to depend on charities for their basic needs negatively affected their wellbeing, and has been a degrading experience for many participants.

Another survival mechanism – and an original finding of this research – was the link between volunteering and asylum allowance. While the literature has highlighted the role of volunteering in terms of ASRs' adjustment (Hunt, 2008; Tomlinson, 2010; Yap, Byrne and Davidson, 2010), in this research volunteering emerged as a significant strategy to address the gaps created by

the low asylum allowance. Many charities and NGOs supported asylum seekers by offering volunteering opportunities. Volunteering included taking part in activities such as preparing meals, assisting in food/clothes banks, befriending newcomers, managing charity shops and other activities (gardening clubs, men and women's club). Participants were not required to volunteer full-time and volunteering times varied based on each organisation and activities. Participants could volunteer for a minimum of one hour to a maximum of 5–6 hours either a day or a week.

Apart from the positive effects on their integration (see Chapter 7), volunteering helped asylum seekers in securing material and financial benefits (modest cash allowance). For some participants, volunteering provided opportunities to access material benefits such as food, clothes, and other household items. Generally, many organisations had specific days and times for food banks and there was a limit on the number of free products an individual could receive at a time. However, as volunteers, participants had access to food or other available items during and after specific food bank days and hours that increased their access. Findings reported collecting more items than a non-volunteering asylum seeker who uses the food banks. Therefore, volunteers were in a convenient position to access food when they were in need rather than waiting for specific food bank days.

> My wife works in a charity as a volunteer, so she gets things from there. When we need something, we just go and get it (Mustafa - M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

> I have to say that we [volunteers] have an advantage through volunteering; that is, our easy access to things in our charity. Because you are a volunteer, you can ask for more stuff, like extra packs of pasta or rice. Oh! We can also get left-over fresh fruits and vegetables after food banks (Namazzi - F, AS, Uganda, 30–35).

During my fieldwork in a charity, I observed volunteers had the opportunity to go through and collect suitable items before and after the specific drop-in hours. On Wednesdays, a charity had drop-ins from 10 am to 2 pm for items such as clothing and small household items. On three occasions, I noticed a volunteer collected different items, such as clothes, drying rack, wall mirror,

cutleries and plates. She took them before the drop-in and moved them behind a partially covered area allocated for volunteers to keep their belongings or kept in her bags. One day she noticed that I was looking at her; later, she approached me and said *'these are very good. I want them. They [individuals who attend the drop-ins] will take it if I do not take it and hide it now. That is why I come early, too'* (Field note: 13:07:2018).

***Photo 1**: Furniture project - Castlemilk Community Church (Source: Castlemilk Community Church)*

Subsequently, participants' experiences and my observation suggested that volunteers had different levels of access to the food bank and other items offered by their organisations. Increased access to such products reduced the amount of money they were obliged to spend on those items. In comparison to non-volunteering asylum seekers, volunteers had more opportunities for material support. However, it cannot be claimed that this was the case of volunteers in all charities. There could be different policies in every organisation and not all the volunteers would be able to access items outside normal food banks. Rather, access to basic materials in food banks is noted here as an ASR survival strategy, and as a testimony to the limitations that they face due to the very low financial support they are offered by the system. This form of access to material benefits reflects the semi-formal form of social protection. Organisations received donations from individuals and other organisations who could not deliver them directly to ASRs and then delivered

them to beneficiaries. Simultaneously, asylum seekers, as volunteers engaged in social protection assemblages by utilising semi-formal support to address their social protection needs.

For some other participants, money provided to reimburse volunteers' travel expenses (herein after called as volunteer allowance) helped them to cater to their daily needs. Aliyah (F, AS, Sudan, 20–25) claimed:

> I volunteer here [at a charity] so they give me money for transport. That is something I cannot afford to pay from my weekly asylum money. If I spent that amount of money [from the asylum allowance], I will be in trouble.

The Home Office guidelines on permission to work and volunteering for asylum seekers states that those who volunteer might be reimbursed for travel and food expenses occurred during their volunteering (Home Office, 2019). Volunteers are often provided with approximately £5 per day to cover their transport costs. However, participants used this money in a variety of ways to meet or supplement their subsistence needs. Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45) explained how he managed to purchase a weekly bus pass and saved money. He spent £16 from his weekly allowance to buy a weekly bus pass in advance. Meantime, he volunteered 5 days a week and received £22.50 to £25 as volunteer allowance. In this case, 5 days of volunteering returned the £16 spent for a bus pass and he managed to save £6.50 to £9 per week so he could spend more money on food items, household items and future needs. Meanwhile, it provides additional financial support for those who live nearby the organisations that they volunteer for and those who decided to walk instead of using public transport.

> I save money from my volunteering and spend it for food. Some foods are expensive here. I can't buy them from my asylum money. So, I save for some weeks and buy some good food once a month. Something healthy and nice (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25).

> I sometimes use my volunteering money to top-up my phone. Sometimes I save for a couple of weeks and buy an expensive top-up [data package] so I can use internet without many problems (Babar - M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35).

> Sometimes we have to take public transport to go to the doctor or to Serco or to the Home Office [premises] but it is not easy to use our asylum money to buy bus tickets. A daytime ticket will take away £5, I suppose, which we need to [otherwise] spend on food. So, I use the volunteering money from my charity to cover bus tickets (Dalilah - F, AS, Egypt, 30–35).

These examples highlight how asylum seekers make use of other forms of social protection and assemblages. The limited asylum allowance and prohibition on formal employment has left many asylum seekers living in deprivation. However, a form of financial support the TSOs provided to asylum seekers as travel reimbursement for their volunteering increased their purchasing capacity. Volunteering allowance has partially contributed to the supplementation of their subsistence needs. Volunteering could also be an opportunity for asylum seekers to resist government controls.

While they faced significant levels of deprivation, participants' situations changed once they received their refugee status. At that point, the asylum support stops after 28 days from the decision date and they become eligible to work and apply for mainstream benefits (Doyle, 2014; Scottish Government, 2018). Although refugees could work, most depend on welfare benefits for their survival, due to their inability to find a job. Eligibility does not mean refugees will be automatically enrolled in the system and receive mainstream benefits. Every refugee must apply by making an application online or in person at a Jobcentre Plus (hereafter referred to as the Jobcentre).

However, the whole process of applying for social benefits had not been simple for many refugees: it is easier said than done. Transitioning from the asylum system to a mainstream support system added pressure on refugees because they had to go through a new system, a new process, new statutory agencies and various requirements. A recent study identified several issues newly recognised refugees faced in accessing financial benefits, such as understanding the system, delay in receiving benefits, living on low income and experiences of sanctions (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). While acknowledging these findings, this thesis adds refugees' concerns about not being prepared for their refugee stage, struggles over a lack of support from

work coaches and bureaucratic dilemmas (the application process and the claimant commitment). when we talked about the struggles of understanding the system, most of them complained about the lack of preparation during their asylum process. During their asylum process, with uncertainty and protracted waiting time, participants focused on obtaining the refugee status and surviving with a low financial situation. Within this asylum system, the process to receive asylum allowance was completely managed and facilitated by the Home Office and Migrant Help. During the asylum process, asylum seekers were normally informed about what to do and what not to do. Throughout this period, there was a lack of formal support and information to prepare them for their next phase as refugees. Most of the stakeholders involved during the asylum process focused on assisting asylum seekers to survive, rather than preparing for the future. Given the lack of preparation, participants could not sort out their application process to receive welfare benefits on time. Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35–40) stated:

> How do you expect me to check about the system immediately after refugee status when you keep me for a long time without giving me refugee status?!

Participants' inability to understand the process became more complicated due to the short-term move-on period. Refugees had less than four weeks to leave the asylum system and apply for social benefits. The uncertainty about their entitlements normally coupled up with the question of where to go and who to approach. In particular, the challenge for many participants was the confusion over 'who approaches who', which delayed their application process.

> I didn't know what to do so I phoned and went to the Citizen's Advice Bureau and they told me you are eligible for benefits, so, you have to claim. They gave me a phone number and asked me to call (Fatima - F, R, Syria, 45–50).

For another example, consider Nathan (DWP), who stated:

> People don't know they are eligible for [benefits]. I remember talking to someone on that day; they got their refugee status. It is a celebration, right?! Really, a good thing, but he was terrified and said, 'I am losing all my money. I am losing my support'. He

> didn’t know that he can get more support now. It is also hard for some because you are expected to look for work and enter mainstream society.

Another significant issue was that refugees’ language struggles not only directly affected their application process (filling in forms) but also created issues in understanding the requirements for a benefits application. For instance, Nathan (DWP) stated:

> The difficulty for refugees is that if they don't know the language, it often takes a number of appointments to set a habitual residency test up … I had seen it happen; people come in for their habitual residency test and don’t have the right documents so they will have to make another appointment. Go home and come back. I have heard the frustration of people that have had to do that.

Although refugee status had been seen as a positive move, most of the participants struggled to obtain services due to a lack of understanding about their entitlements to benefits and a lack of awareness about the Jobcentre system.

Secondly, the application process itself presents a significant dilemma in accessing the Jobcentre benefits. Though the Jobcentre applications could be completed and submitted online or physically at the Jobcentre, the online system has been preferred to avoid further delays in booking appointments and waiting. While refugees’ intention was to complete the process as soon as possible, their inability to work with a computerised system hindered their progress. Several participants stated that they struggled to use a computer because of their lack of access to education and computers in their countries of origin. Meantime, those who tried to complete the application forms reported receiving inadequate support from their work coaches. In particular, the work coaches have been criticised for ignoring the specific needs and challenges of refugees, such as language barriers and knowledge about computers. For example:

> [Work coaches] don’t help. I told them a hundred times that I cannot fill the form, but they said go and use the computer. It is wrong. They should help me. They should help if somebody doesn’t know the language (Jamshed - M, R, Iran, 45–50)

Julia (NGO – Employment Support) said:

> [the] Jobcentres don't understand at all. We [deal with] [the] Jobcentres around Glasgow and they just don't know what to do with migrants. They just don't care, to be honest. I think when they have clients from overseas, they just panic and spin down. So, with [the] Jobcentre, they [the work coaches] just sign, give money and ask migrants to go and find jobs. They are not interested in people's lives

On the other hand, when further queried about refugees' complaints about the lack of orientation or support from work coaches, Nathan (DWP) highlighted the communication barrier as the key issue. Even if work coaches thought they provided adequate information, refugees' inability to understand creates a gap in the process.

Consequently, refugees reached out to informal social networks and TSOs to complete their application process. The findings identified that refugees sought help from their friends, family members and other refugees, especially those who had been through the same process or were at a similar stage; this indicates the use of informal social protection. Newly recognised refugees assumed that those who were already in the benefits system were familiar with the process and could guide them. Informal networks also helped newly recognised refugees when using a computerised system.

> I asked my friend to come and help me. I told him to use the laptop on the internet for translation for English and Farsi because I didn't know the language and [I needed to] to use a computer to complete the application (Jamshed – M, R, Iran, 45–50).

For some, friends and fellow refugees advised them to approach the third sector, while others went directly to organisations, such as the SRC and the BRC for assistance. The SRC played a crucial role in assisting refugees to claim benefits in Glasgow. For example, Tenneh (F, R, Sierra Leone, 25–30) stated, *'I went to the Scottish Refugee Council and they helped me. They helped me to phone [the] Jobcentre'.* Furthermore, a good relationship with statutory agency staffs also helped several participants (see Chapter 7). Although they did not have any obligations to help a refugee to fill in the Jobcentre application form, several work coaches assisted refugees though

their goodwill and when they already had a good relationship with them. These experiences showed an example of assemblages of social protection where individuals managed to make use of formal and informal social protection mechanisms (Faist, 2013; Boccagni, 2016).

Thirdly, refugee participants reported struggling to cater to their needs until they get welfare benefits. Once refugees successfully submit their application and complete the necessary process, they must wait around two weeks to receive the benefit. According to Nathan (DWP), the processing time normally takes around two to six weeks. This duration was a challenge for many participants because once they received their refugee status the Home Office allowance was stopped. During this waiting period, refugees became more vulnerable in managing their lives without any financial support. Most of the participants claimed to have no savings from their asylum financial support, which made the situation even more difficult.

> For the job seekers allowance, you have to wait two weeks and you don't have any money. The process takes time (Farhad - M, R, Iran, 35–40).

TSOs indeed played a significant role in fulfilling refugees' food security needs until they begin to receive social benefits. As previously mentioned, one of the survival mechanisms of the research participants was to access foodbanks for their daily needs. For example:

> Imagine what can we do when they suddenly stop your money and ask you to apply for another benefit and wait and wait. It took four weeks for them to transfer money. During that period, I struggled a lot. I went back to charities for food banks. This is not acceptable (Muhammed - M, R, Eritrea, 35–40).

Fourthly, receiving benefits means refugees must comply with their Jobcentre claimant's commitment. Refugees' understanding of the system and orientation by work coaches, however, affected the claimant commitment process. Those who did not have a good understanding of the claimant commitment ended up committing only to look for jobs, rather than getting involved in other activities. Their decision was influenced by their immediate need for financial support, the pressure to look for jobs, misconceptions about

the commitment, and a lack of support from the staff. Therefore, they agreed with anything that had been presented to them; they did not bother asking questions for fear of delays or benefit loss. There was a misconception that claimant commitment should only be about looking for jobs, rather than engaging in activities that could help them to find a better job, and this misconception influenced participants' commitments. This perception was transferred through the informal networks and resulted in newly recognised refugees committing to any job without much attention to the details.

Moreover, participants criticised the lack of support provided by work coaches who pressured them to sign the commitment as soon as possible, rather than explaining it to the beneficiary. Vrăbiescu and Kalir (2017) highlight a similar deficiency of the welfare system in which state employees' interventions adversely affects beneficiaries' lives. When asked about their Jobcentre's work coach's support, participants had not been instructed what steps to follow to find a job or where to go or whom to speak to; rather, they have been asked to search for jobs online. When interviewed, Nathan (DWP) pointed out that a number of work coaches at the Jobcentres put pressure on people to look for jobs without giving them the right support to find that job. A couple of participants shared their experiences, as follows:

Flora (F, R, Cameroon, 35–40) stated:

> When you start with [the] Jobcentre they will give a form to sign. When you sign, you don't know what it is about. When you start to have problems they say, but you signed the form. They didn't tell me before [I signed] but they read bla bla ... you are allowed to work and bla bla. Then you sign the form to say yes, I will find a job, and if I don't find a job they won't pay.

For another example, consider Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) who said:

> My expectation is that you [work coaches] have to contact a company and tell them, you know what, I have someone who can work for you. Then you phone me and tell me, I got you a job. But you tell me to go to search for the job; honestly, you are making my life harder.

Participants who managed to access TSOs (for example, SRC) and social networks regarding welfare benefits reported having a fair understanding of

claimant commitment. In one regard, TSOs provided formal and informal information and guidance on how to go through benefits system.

> I think we work hard on knowing what services are available… probably have reasonable understanding of basic services people might need to access. So, we can tell people (Beth, Charity – Household support).

> Basically, they need simple and clear information. So, we provide basic information about what to do, where to go, that sort of things. We are not experts, but we know how to help them to go through the process (Sadie, Charity – Household support).

In another regard, informal network contributed via providing informal information, guidance and advice. The role of informal network here could be seen in how refugees engaged in social protection assemblages. As a result, some participants who had gained a good knowledge of the process through friends and others committed to engaging in different activities.

> I committed to looking for a job. I also committed to volunteering and taking English classes. I got signatures in my Jobcentre notebook confirming my attendance at English classes. Meanwhile, I am also looking for jobs (Mahdi - M, R, Syria, 25–30).

These experiences demonstrate that both formal and informal social protection can create or exacerbate vulnerabilities among ASRs. Nevertheless, formal, informal and a combination of these forms of social protection facilitated the whole process.

Overall, as discussed in other studies (Lindsay, Gillespie and Dobbie, 2010; Mulvey, 2013), this research also highlights the destitute situation asylum seekers faced, which reflects the lack of state-led formal social protection support. One notable finding was that destitute situations forced asylum seekers to adopt different coping mechanisms for their everyday survival in Glasgow. The coping mechanisms asylum seekers employed highlighted the inadequate formal support from the state and their dependency on the third sector. Although the third sector is a formal social protection provider, certain support they provide, such as food and clothes bank, represent semi-formal

social protection. While most of the asylum seekers depended on charities, others reported sacrificing their food intake or consuming alternative food products to cope with their financial situation. A significant finding was the role of volunteering that provided financial and material benefits to those who were engaging in voluntary work in charities. Nonetheless, the enforced destitution created severe everyday crisis among asylum seekers and forced them to rely on TSOs.

In addition, becoming a refugee is seen as something that liberates individuals from a hostile asylum process and helps people manage their lives independently. Refugees are offered financial benefits because they are unable to engage in employment due to several reasons such as a lack of qualifications, language issues, and challenges related to their immigration status. However, dilemmas related to welfare benefits affected refugees' access. The experiences of research participants highlight the gap in individualised support for refugees. Refugees require specific support from the Jobcentre and work coaches; however, their need for more support has not often been considered. Consequently, while refugees struggle with the bureaucratic process, the claimant commitment placed more pressure on them. The challenges combined with a lack of support led participants to seek assistance from social networks and TSOs. Relying on others, especially on TSOs, for assistance has been sometimes seen as humiliating and often placed ASRs in complicated positions. Overall, ASRs' financial situation and associated challenges disempower them, affecting their integration (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017).

While participants talked more about their experiences of housing and financial benefits, there were also dilemmas in their access to education, particularly languages classes in Glasgow. The next section illustrates the educational experiences of my research participants.

5.3. Balancing educational opportunities and barriers

Education is another devolved matter that comes under the responsibility of the Scottish Government. There has been increased attention from the state regarding the education provision for ASRs. The New Scots 2018 emphasised

the importance of education, which is often linked with the achievement of integration and community cohesion (Scottish Government, 2018). The previous sections of this thesis recognised the need for English language skills. Meantime, several participants were able to communicate in English and their educational needs were wider than language classes. These differences among ASRs demanded various types of education provision such as ESOL classes and access to further education courses in colleges and universities. The interviews with my research participants highlighted three aspects of their education experiences: *educational aspirations*, *opportunities for education* and *barriers to education*.

Within this research, it emerged many participants had strong educational aspirations, although there were many barriers. Closer analysis of participants' experiences revealed that among ASRs their aspiration to educate themselves appeared to be a proactive response to build a future in the UK. For many participants, English was not part of their daily life in their countries of origin, therefore most of them had limited or no English skills. Once they arrived in the UK, the Scottish environment demanded they learn the language, because their English skills shaped their daily encounters in Glasgow. Furthermore, education, especially learning English, was seen as an essential requirement to enter the labour market. ASRs' aspirations involved further education to obtain career-focused skills. Many participants said education had great value and that their interest in education was to increase their chances of finding suitable jobs and earning a good salary. Being educated, however, appears to increase more than opportunities and income since being educated also improves ASRs' self-esteem and confidence, evident in the following quote:

> This is the primary goal now; to learn English. I just planned for my life and the first thing that I need is to learn English. If I learn English, I can achieve other things in my life. (Mahdi - M, R, Syria, 25–30).

Fatima (F, R, Syria, 45–50) stated:

> In the UK, you cannot find a good job unless you are educated and have a good education background. Of course, you can do any types of jobs but with little income.

In the meantime, a significant finding of this thesis was that some participants' interest in engaging in learning activities was influenced by their precarious situation as asylum seekers. According to Danso, *'*[education] *was the only thing that kept us busy'* (Danso - M, R, Congo, 35–40). Generally, asylum seekers are not allowed to engage in employment and income generation activities; having no job meant the absence of meaningful activity. Interviewees reported staying home most of the time doing nothing. At some point, it was unbearable and unacceptable for them to spend more than eight to ten hours in the daytime not engaging in activities. Subsequently, the perception of doing nothing encouraged them to take part in language classes on a part-time basis. Although it was not the only choice, many engaged in learning activities to pass time during the asylum application process.

> It was a good idea to go and study while you are an asylum seeker because you have no other things to do [except] sitting at home and sleeping every day. It was not good (Bokamoso - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

Nevertheless, for a minority of interviewees, education was not a priority or part of their life goals, since their focus was on obtaining refugee status. It was assumed that engaging in education distracted them from focusing on the asylum process, which was uncertain and rigorous. During this time, participants feared that engaging in learning could hinder their access to volunteering and other charity activities, which would bring them much-needed material and financial benefits. This, in particular, highlights the lack of support from the state and ASRs' need to depend on other forms formal and semi-formal social protection for their daily survival. Meantime, participants who received their refugee status claimed to be focused on finding a job, rather than spending time studying, because they wished to be independent and take care of themselves and their families.

> I didn't try [to study] because I didn't even think about it. To be honest with you, the biggest thing, for the most part, is the matter of survival. I doubt that even if I could have taken an education course, I doubt that I would have been able to survive (Samuel - M, AS, Canada, 40–45).

While ASRs aspire to partake in education, accessing education poses several challenges. Participants explained some of the issues already identified in previous research, such as long length of waiting time to enrol into ESOL classes, financial struggles, lack of recognition of their previous qualifications and barriers enforced through immigration status (asylum seekers cannot access fulltime education) (Han, Starkey and Green, 2010; Phillimore, 2011; Slade and Dickson, 2020).

To reiterate, waiting time is a challenge for many asylum seekers. Glasgow receives more asylum seekers than any other cities in the UK and, thus, colleges received greater numbers of applications with limited places to offer. Therefore, those colleges had to enrol asylum seekers based on a first-come, first-served basis. The others had to be put on a waiting list for future recruitment.

> I went to the City of Glasgow College, but they said you can study only after 2 years because we have too many students on the waiting list. So, I have to wait for a long time (Zahir - M, AS, Iraq, 25–30).

However, the language classes that TSOs provided for ASRs in Glasgow presented opportunities for them to learn English. For example:

> I tried many times to go to the college and get lessons. I did a test but still didn't get any answers until now. This is four months ago. I tried many times to say just register me for ESOL lessons and they didn't do that. So now I go to Ibrox library and [a charity in Govan] classes. These are charities and volunteers. They provide these classes (Mahdi – M, R, Syria, 25–30).

> The community that I know, they are having some computer classes. They are having some language classes, even if you cannot get admission in the college. They are having some small rooms for people so at least they can learn from beginning (Babar - M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35).

While the lessons given in libraries are more formal, English classes that TSOs provided represent both formal and semi-formal support. Some organisations receive state funds to provide language classes; thus, it falls within the formal sector provision. As Beth (Charity – Household support) stated: *'We have been addressing English class demands by generous*

charity funding, and quite a lot of Scottish government funding'. There were also classes provided with the help of Glaswegians who volunteered to teach English to ASRs, which could be seen as a semi-formal social protection. Regardless of the type of funding, TSOs' English classes have been a crucial contribution to addressing ASRs' need for language lessons. As Tan (Charity shop) stated:

> So, we provide English classes. We have one English class at the moment every week but usually it is two a week. That is a mix group probably in between 14 to 20 people a week, sometimes [attendance] is low or high.

Informal networks played a crucial role in directing ASRs to these opportunities that TSOs provide. For example, Asim (M, AS, Sudan, 25–30) stated: *'My friend helped me and encouraged me to get there and register for these lessons'.*

In another example, Zahir (M, AS, Iraq, 25–30) stated:

> I was trying a lot to join the college for ESOL classes, but I gave up after a few months waiting for them to join me. I heard about English classes in community group but I thought it is the same as colleges. And one day, I was talking to another asylum seeker I know when I went for a community meal. He is from the same country so we can talk well. Then at some point we talked about English classes and he told me about classes in Govan. I just asked him, are you talking about the college ESOL classes and he said I gave up because they are still not joining me. But he stopped me and told me English class in [a charity in Govan] and said I don't need to apply, do a test and wait. On the next day, he even took me there and joined me in. That's a good thing about having friends.

ASRs' access to different education opportunities, however, depended on getting relevant information. Although access to information was an issue in many other areas of social protection, it significantly affected participants' ability to find and enrol on courses. Generally, English has been promoted as the most important learning need due to ASRs' limited language skills and as discussed earlier, several participants showed interest in learning. While formal information about education opportunities like processes and where to enrol was made available at the asylum housing provider, libraries, colleges, local education authorities, charities and NGOs, participants were mostly

introduced to the courses (especially English) by friends, relatives, fellow ASRs who had already completed them and their social networks. Many participants were motivated by their friends and other refugees to enrol in English and other courses (beauty therapy, computing, sewing, etc.) because of their ability to talk through, ask questions, gain explanation and make use of offers to introduce them to charities that provide such learning opportunities.

On the other hand, informal social network also sometimes negatively affected ASRs' access to education. For example, Abdo (M, AS, Sudan, 30–35) shared the following statement about receiving incorrect information:

> My friends just told me that I can study only after having my refugee status. My friends told me about this because they started to study after they got refugee status.

Until the interview, Abdo assumed that he cannot study anything except English as an asylum seeker. During the interview, I explained that he is eligible to enrol to study non-advanced courses in colleges. After that, he stated that he would have applied for such courses a month ago. One month might seem not a long time but a lack of information about his entitlement delayed his opportunity to apply for a course by one year. His situation demonstrated the negative impacts of lacking certain social networks.

Furthermore, a significant finding of this study was that participants experienced a considerable increase in family responsibilities following their asylum process in the UK. As a newcomer, they became the person to navigate the support system (the formal, informal and semi-formal) to cater to their needs, e.g. visiting and collecting things from food banks, applying for mainstream services and follow-up. In some cases, this meant women and young adults became breadwinners. Role reversal significantly affected matriarchal households and dominated their educational aspirations.

> When I came here, my responsibilities changed a lot because I just came with my children, and my husband could not come with us. So I had to be responsible … As a single mother, I have many more responsibilities (Dalilah - F, AS, Egypt, 30–35).

Familial responsibilities also coupled up with gender-related barriers. As the above quote demonstrated, women's educational attainment was hindered by the expected household chores and the duties associated with bringing up their children. Their family roles are set by traditions, cultural norms and expectations, whereby women are expected to be at home and support the family, while men are expected to find a job and find money to support the family. Slade and Dickson (2020) also highlight a similar point that female adult learners have been discouraged by their male partners for cultural reasons. While women were also required to learn English for effective communication and to move around, their roles as mothers, wives and carers meant they were unable to devote time to education. During the data analysis, it was noticed that none of the female participants who were married and living with children registered at ESOL classes, whereas single female participants and males (regardless of their family's status) reported attending ESOL classes or applying for registration. Akifa (F, R, Sudan, 25–30) stated: *'because I have kids, I cannot go to school for the time being. I will register my name once my kids go to nursery or to school'.*

Moreover, decisions to stay home and look after their children and other family members had always been taken by their husbands. The following examples indicate the role of men in making decisions about their wives' educational attainments:

> My wife, she does not even know ABC, but since we have a little daughter, she is taking care of her (Mahdi - M, R, Syria, 25–30).

> I have been asking for English classes in the afternoon for my wife because I have kids. They didn't give this to me. So, she didn't get access to education but I got to do English classes (Mustafa - M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

At the same time, these traditional roles had been shifted in some participants' families. Turner (2000: 9) suggested changing gender roles within refugee families could be highly sensitive, and refugees may see this change as a sign of 'moral decay' where 'women no longer respect their husbands'. A participant who did not wish to be named stated that it must be women's duty to look after their children and complete daily household

chores, such as cleaning, cooking and washing. He also emphasised that it would be unacceptable if women let their husbands do this work. However, several male participants took over some of their wives' daily chores to let their wives become educated.

> My wife is learning beauty therapy. I did start [to study], but I could not continue because we have two kids and only one of us can continue. It is really hard for us (Babar - M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35).

Some ASRs were able to balance their educational goals and family responsibilities with the help of informal social networks and TSOs. Firstly, having good friends who could look after their children while attending the language classes became an asset for their educational aspirations. Although it was not an easy option, as Tenneh (F, R, Sierra Leone, 25–30) stated:

> It is hard for me to manage my son and go classes. I only feel better because my friend is in the house. We are living together in the same house, so I sometimes leave him with her. There are some friends, but they are far and most of them are working. I do know about two families in the area. They don't have time because they have their families and kids to look after.

Tenneh engaged in social protection assemblages to access education by utilising her informal social network and the support (formal and semi-formal) from TSOs.

Secondly, some charities and NGOs provided free childcare and encouraged some participants to attend language classes. Beth (Charity – Household support) stated:

> We see more parents, especially mothers attending our English classes, because we provide special help to people with children alongside our language lessons. We have volunteers looking after children while parents learn English.

Childcare is significant for those who have no relatives or friends to look after their children. Participants – especially asylum seekers – were unable to afford private childcare support due to the inadequate financial support from the state. Childcare support is, therefore, a valuable tool for enabling migrants to engage in learning activities (Slade and Dickson, 2020). TSOs' provision of

this service presents the complex nature of social protection. The majority of organisations involved in this research provided a childcare service and English lessons with the help of volunteers and donations, which is a form of semi-formal social protection. In the meantime, there are organisations that provided English lessons and childcare service with the help of state funding, which represents formal support. ASRs combining support from friends and TSOs to access education nevertheless engaged in social protection assemblages.

In addition to free childcare, Slade and Dickson (2020) suggest that hot meals organisations provided to migrant leaners have been a stimulus for their engagement, which this thesis also corroborates. In a few organisations where I volunteered, English lessons were organised before the lunch period so that ASRs could have a meal after their class and had no need to worry about meals. It was not only hot meals but also access to dry rations to fulfil food needs that played an important role in enticing migrants to attend English classes. When I was visiting a church in Glasgow to conduct observation, the Pastor stated that migrants regularly attend lessons there because English classes have been conducted on their food bank days (Field note – 19.07.2018).

On the one hand, asylum seekers especially require support from TSOs to fulfil the gap the inadequate asylum allowance created in regard to their food needs. On the other hand, ASRs require childcare support to engage in learning while their children are safely cared for. Thus, having these two kinds of support in one place enabled parents to concentrate on their learning while knowing that their children are being taken care of and, additionally, they could go home with dry rations including fruits, vegetables, canned food and other food products.

Finally, while some participants emphasised the importance of doing something productive during their perceived unfulfilling and liminal asylum period, others said that attending classes at colleges and TSOs gave rise to opportunities to meet other ASRs. Language classes that colleges provide are formal in nature due to the direct state funding while TSOs provide formal and as well as semi-formal forms of education. Regardless of their types of social

protection, language classes contribute to building informal social protection for ASRs in their locality.

> You know, English classes are a good place to meet people. In my class, I had people from Syria, Iraq and Sudan. We talk to each other and after a few classes we become friends. We [share] jokes and laugh. That is good feeling to be with other people and feel happy, you know (Gulzar – M, R, Sudan, 30–35).

Attending classes was not just about meeting other ASRs but also a place to find solutions for practical issues. As Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) said:

> When I was an asylum seeker, I used to attend my English classes because someone in the language classes is gonna help you out [with issues or problems].

Findings revealed that ASRs with diverse experiences of navigating through the system attended language classes. If an individual had a problem or needed guidance on housing or financial support or healthcare, members of the class could often help them. This specific experience emphasises the importance of social protection assemblages. Informal social network available through one form of formal social protection (education) assists and facilitates access to formal social protection support.

Education is a gateway to future prospects that increases their chances of a good quality of life. As discussed in Chapter 2, education is one of the areas where the Scottish approach differs from the wider UK and their restrictive support. Although Scottish authorities take steps to ensure ASRs' access to education, several practical factors such as waiting time, financial constraints and systematic barriers still affected them (see also Mulvey, 2013). Even though individuals desired education, their family circumstances hindered their access to it. In particular, those who had families had to find employment rather than spending time on education. It comes from their view of moral responsibility (see Chapter 6). Significantly, women with children faced specific barriers due to their caring responsibilities derived from their culture and norm. However, language classes that TSOs provided along with hot meals, dry rations and, in some cases, free childcare, encouraged ASRs and, in particular, parents, to engage in learning activities.

The next section will focus on participants' experiences of healthcare services in Glasgow – another key aspect of the formal social protection system in which informal social protection also plays an important role.

5.4. Healthcare concerns and managing access to healthcare

Participants reported having different physical and psychological healthcare needs when they arrived in a host country, which is widely recognised in the existing literature (Taylor, 2009; Mangrio and Sjögren Forss, 2017; Jayaweera, 2018). For most of the participants, healthcare was not considered a crisis but rather something to engage in proactively. Nevertheless, access to healthcare is complex and challenging for ASRs in Glasgow, and therefore understanding the current process to access healthcare is vital in examining the extent to which ASRs use available services. In this section, I will focus on the following aspects of ASRs' healthcare experiences: *attitudes towards health services, engaging with the healthcare process, ability to afford* and *the language barrier in the health setting*.

While investigating ASRs' experiences of access and engagement, the findings implied that they have positive attitudes towards healthcare in Glasgow. Almost all participants expressed gratitude towards the NHS GGC due to the availability of services in comparison with their countries of origin, access to care, cost-free support, the registration process and the helpfulness of healthcare professionals. Although the presence of healthcare facilities does not guarantee equal and full access to care, several participants appreciate the available healthcare services in Glasgow. Yazbeck, Rabie and Pande (2017) highlighted that the MENA region has the lowest levels of public spending on health, with unequal access and poorest quality of care in the world. This could have contributed to the fact that they did not have easy access in their countries of origin, especially those from rural areas.

> As far as health is concerned, medical services are very good compared to where I grew up. I am trying to think if I was treated differently or not; I don't think so (Bokamoso - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

Interviewees, especially asylum-seeking participants, highlighted that they did not encounter many difficulties in registering for health services at a nearby GP. It was observed that NHS GGC's Asylum Health Bridging Team (AHBT) played a crucial role in the initial health assessment and the GP allocation process. In Glasgow, the Asylum Health Coordinator on the NHSGCC Health Board allocates asylum seekers to a GP practice (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, 2018). The existing healthcare practice ensured that any individuals – including ASRs – cannot be refused based on their race, gender, class, age, religion, disability etc. For instance, any destitute person or someone not registered with a GP can access healthcare services at the Hunter Street Homelessness GP surgery in Glasgow. The asylum housing provider's active role in facilitating asylum seekers' registration process with a GP had contributed to a successful initial engagement.

> Since I arrived, Serco helped me to register with a GP. They took me to a GP near my house. I registered there and started to deal with that GP (Dalilah - F, AS, Egypt, 30–35).

> When you arrive, you receive free health access. They did a lot of tests in the second week of my arrival and they gave me a letter to go and register with a GP. I spoke to my housing officer; he took me to the nearest GP. I took the letter and I went to register at a GP near my house. Then it was just a normal process (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

However, registering with a GP did not mean ASRs were able to access healthcare services freely and as easily as they wished. For them, physical access to healthcare was complex and not completely straightforward. Most of them struggled to understand how the system worked and how they could navigate through the system to receive treatment. The findings of this thesis corroborates wider literature suggesting that ASRs often encounter challenges in navigating through the process (booking appointments, waiting time to see a doctors and the length of consultation time), having a lack of information or awareness of the system, language issues which creates a communication barrier with healthcare staff, a lack of trust of healthcare professionals and the treatment they receive (Taylor, 2009; Nellums et al.,

2018; Kang, Tomkow and Farrington, 2019). For example, participants emphasised the following:

Booking appointments

> For me, it is not easy because we have to make appointments to get the service. They ask me to come back day after tomorrow or some other time but for me, I need to be treated immediately (Adiel - M, AS, Namibia, 35–40).

Length of consultation time

> You made me wait for weeks and weeks and now you are not going to spend more than 15 minutes. How unfair is that? (Akifa - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

There were examples of ASRs lacking trust in the healthcare system:

> They [the GP] didn't give enough care so, I gave up and stayed at home. When I go to the doctor, I am in a very bad condition. I don't feel that doctors give enough attention to that. They always ask me to try a medication. They don't give exact care. All the medication they gave me didn't work. I still have that pain. I need them to not only give me one medication but also to understand what my condition is and [investigate] why this pain exists. I still have the same condition (Mahdi - M, R, Syria, 25–30).

> They just told me to go and get something from the pharmacy. I don't like the hospital or GP because they don't do anything. This is the problem for people here, we don't trust. We don't think medicine is good here and [doubt that the] GP can help a lot (Mustafa – M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

Even though participants emphasised the previously mentioned problems as significant, three problems and the way they handled them so as to access healthcare services in Glasgow emerged as crucial. Firstly, the misuse of A&E service in their nearest hospital. The misuse of A&E services has been primarily linked to ASRs' lack of awareness and confusion over the NHS process and types of healthcare services. Studies have shown that the lack of knowledge about different services is a significant challenge for ASRs (O'Donnell et al., 2007, 2008; Kang, Tomkow and Farrington, 2019; Piacentini et al., 2019). Aisha (NHSGCC) said:

> Lots of people don't access proper services because they don't know about it. They normally misunderstand and call 999 for non-emergency matters.

Another example was Bokamoso (M, AS, Namibia, 30-35), who stated:

> A lot of people, they don't know enough about services. For them 'A&E' is the easy way. They then go and sit and wait for 5 hours, 6 hours or more.

Further inquiry, however, suggests that accessing emergency services has been used as a mechanism to navigate through the healthcare system. The inability to get appointments promptly with doctors led ASRs to use services at walk-in-centres and accident and emergency (A&E). For example, Adiel (M, AS, Namibia, 35-40) explained:

> In the hospital [A&E] they treat you. Even though they don't treat you well, they treat you on the same day.

In another example, Aisha (NHSGCC) explained:

> I met a couple of asylum seekers. They talked about two reasons for going to emergency services. One, it is not easy to get an appointment [with a doctor]. It could also be the result of not knowing how to book an appointment. And the other reason is, as they said, GPs don't really understand our problems and they are not really spending enough time with us. So we are going to emergency services.

Kang, Tomkow and Farrington (2019) point out that ASRs' perceptions of waiting times for appointments are a major reason for them to resort to A&E instead of other forms of care. The interviewees particularly highlighted that opportunities to consult a doctor were higher in A&E or walk-in-centres than at their GPs. Challenges in booking an early appointment coupled with participants' expectation to see a doctor influenced their approach to other NHS services. Some participants' narratives indicated that their social network contributed to their deliberate misuse of A&E.

> I had this problem and I really wanted to see a doctor. I called my GP and they said the earliest appointment is, I think it was 10 or 12 days from the day I called them. I was angry and complaining to my friend. He is also from my country and had problems with hospitals and treatment… And, [he] said go to the hospital. Use that emergency unit in the hospital. I asked why,

> and he said he went there a few times and there a doctor will check you on the same day (Fabunni - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

Fabunni is someone who claimed to have a good knowledge of the healthcare system in Glasgow. Although he knew how to handle to the process through his GP, his inability to get an appointment when he needed it led him to seek other options. He reported to have reluctantly followed his friend's advice and used the A&E to seek medical support: *'I know it is not the way to do but I didn't have any other choice'*. Fabunni's case was an example of how informal social protection direct individual ASRs to navigate through the formal social protection system, in this case, healthcare.

Secondly, informal social networks and TSOs facilitate ASRs' access to healthcare. This includes seeking assistance from TSOs to book appointments to see a doctor and asking friends or staff from TSOs to translate and explain the content of medical correspondence. This obviously linked to the fact that the participants have varying levels of English proficiency, and lack of English language skills has been a significant barrier in the healthcare setting. For some, English is manageable and for others, they can speak only a few words. Those who speak a little or no English faced challenges as soon as they decided to engage with healthcare providers. For instance, booking appointments was difficult for many, Jamal (Male, R, Syria, 55–60) stated:

> When I want to get any help, any medical help or appointments in the GPs, with the GPs or in the hospital, I just go to the Red Cross and there is a girl there [name of the staff]. She helps me in getting all these things and she helps me in doing all my things. I cannot do that [book appointments] myself because I don't know English. It's very difficult for me to make appointments. Every time, she gets the appointment for me. So she helps me a lot with this thing. I don't, I can't do that myself.

Jamal's experience of difficulty making medical appointments showed that seeking help from the TSOs to make appointments on his behalf has been more effective than if tried to go through the process himself. This is not an isolated incident as many migrants with limited or no English language skills seek help from charities and NGOs to navigate through the system. TSOs as

formal and semi-formal social protection providers play a crucial role assisting ASRs to access healthcare.

Participants not only used TSOs for making appointments but also to translate and understand medical correspondence coupling up with help gained through social connections. During consultations, generally speaking, interpretation was provided. It can be accessed by anyone in need of interpretation, with a straightforward request from either the patient or healthcare professionals. However, individuals with limited or no English proficiency has also exacerbated the post-consultation process. In particular, follow-up medical instructions (if deemed necessary by GPs) have been given to patients in writing. Since the interpretation service is provided typically only during the consultation time, ASRs do not have a chance to have translation in person (face-to-face or telephone interpreting), which caused frustration among many participants. In the end, they tended to address this challenge by approaching friends who could read English, as well as staff at charities and NGOs.

Thirdly, even though healthcare is free for ASRs in Scotland, there are associated costs to access services. In particular, asylum seekers had to manage their healthcare-related expenses such as transport and communication within the weekly asylum allowance. While they tried to use most of this allowance for their food needs, a small amount of financial support from the state hugely affected their ability to book and attend appointments. Ringing up GPs to book an appointment involved a long and expensive phone call. This is because many have had to hold the line for about 15–20 minutes until someone in the GP services answers (a receptionist or someone who handles the telephone calls).

> If you are asked to phone to arrange an appointment at the GP, you don’t have enough credit to make phone calls (Flora - F, R, Cameroon, 35–40).

Consequently, to avoid unnecessary expenditure on phone calls, they have had to go to GP services in person to book appointments. For some participants, visiting in person was also difficult due to the distance between their houses and the GP’s location as they cannot afford to pay for the bus

ticket. Consequently, they approach the nearest and most familiar charity requesting assistance to book an appointment. In the meantime, as discussed previously, ASRs also approach charities for help to communicate with their GPs in English.

The findings, therefore, suggested that ASRs are facing multiple barriers in regard to access to healthcare, but they have been making use of other forms social protection to facilitate their access. While informal social protection (social networks) facilitated participants' access via providing information on navigation mechanisms and assisting in translating documents, TSOs' semi-formal role help ASRs to book appointments and provided assistance with translation. To reiterate, this research also acknowledges and confirms previous important findings regarding the issues of booking appointments, language issues, affordability and awareness of the support system. (Jayaweera, 2018; Kang, Tomkow and Farrington, 2019).

5.5. Conclusion

Asylum seekers, as individuals who endure a long migration journey with many changes and challenges, expressed an expectation that they would settle in one place upon arrival in Glasgow. However, their expectations were often left unmet. This chapter has outlined the importance of looking at ASRs' experiences of formal social protection (housing, financial benefits, education and healthcare) and links with informal social protection. Although formal support is available, findings indicate that ASRs frequently experience difficulties. The overall findings emphasise five aspects of social protection for ASRs in Glasgow: inadequate formal support; the role of the UK government in controlling asylum seekers; uncertainty created by the system; dilemmas in policy and practice; presence of informal, semi-formal social protection and social protection assemblages; and TSOs' gap-filling role.

ASRs primarily complained about extensive state control over their settlement process and inadequate support. The housing system has various stages and ASRs experienced difficulties in all of them: in one regard, asylum seekers endured a state of permanent temporariness due to the transient nature of asylum accommodation offered to those awaiting asylum status. The financial

situation caused more adverse survival conditions, whereby they had to depend on charities to fulfil their subsistence needs. The small asylum allowance caused destitution, and as a result, most restricted their food intake as well as making other sacrifices.

Refugees also faced several challenges with regard to housing and financial benefits. Refugees considered the homeless housing process a continuation of their temporariness because they could not find a social house on receiving refugee status and had to become homeless to enter the homeless housing process. Financially, many participants struggled in addressing the bureaucratic requirements of obtaining the Jobcentre benefits due to their lack of English language skills and issues with finding employment.

Poor access to language classes was a major drawback for the participants, and this research has highlighted the dilemmas that ASRs faced in accessing language and other kinds of education. Several women ASRs particularly could not take advantage of educational opportunities because of the demands placed upon them to fulfil childcare responsibilities. Furthermore, ASRs had expectations of healthcare treatment in Glasgow and felt frustrated when actual healthcare provision did not meet their expectations, which was shaped by ASRs' lack of knowledge about the UK's healthcare system.

The findings of this chapter therefore demonstrate that the formal and, at times also informal social protection, can only partly address ASRs' vulnerabilities; at times it exacerbates them. Participants reported using informal social protection to facilitate their access to formal support in Glasgow, and in some cases, the semi-formal social protection filled some of the gaps of the formal system. Informal support provided included gathering and sharing information, assisting in completing bureaucratic tasks and providing guidance. ASRs' combination of different forms of social protection to achieve their overall social protection highlighted the importance of assemblages. Simultaneously, TSOs played a significant gap-filling role due to the inadequate and sometimes inaccessible formal support. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, state authorities' inability to provide adequate support for ASRs increased demands for TSOs' intervention.

In the following chapter, ASRs' everyday experiences of adjustment and settlement beyond the interaction with the social protection system are discussed, with a focus on applying different dimensions of vulnerability: spatial, socio-political, socio-cultural and temporal dimensions.

6. Everyday Experiences of Being an Asylum Seeker and Refugee in Glasgow

6.1. Introduction

Social protection 'in all its forms (state-provided, market, informal) is, fundamentally, a policy response to vulnerability' (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019: 3). Despite increased recognition of the role of social protection in addressing vulnerabilities, the findings established that the available social protection support for ASRs have had a significant impact in making them vulnerable and increasing their vulnerabilities. This chapter reinforces that the state plays a crucial role in creating vulnerability among ASRs through its immigration controls and practices (Anderson, Sharma and Wright, 2009). In this chapter, I present findings arising from interviews aimed at exploring the everyday experiences of being an asylum seeker or refugee in Glasgow. This analysis foregrounds various dimensions of vulnerability associated with being a migrant. The discussion centres on spatial, socio-political, socio-cultural and temporal experiences of vulnerability among ASRs within the social protection available to them, drawing on Sabates-Wheeler and Waite's (2003) framework of migrant-specific vulnerabilities.

In the spatial dimension, attention is given to participants' views about their sense of belonging, which involves their neighbourhood relationships, daily urban mobility, language difficulties and knowledge of their rights and entitlements. The socio-political dimension focuses on policy-imposed liminalities, especially the participants' interpretations of living without the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities. Socio-cultural dimension includes participants' views on trust and distrust. Finally, the analysis of participants' experiences of psychological wellbeing is presented to illustrate the impact of social protection available to them by looking at various dimensions of vulnerability.

6.2.Spatial manifestations of vulnerability

Within their new local environment, participants encountered several forms of vulnerability. They were physically separated from mainstream society by being housed in specific, designated locations and mostly excluded from the city areas, which reduced their opportunities for social interactions. Participants hence indicated that moving to a new locality was a significant factor that shaped their sense of belonging and settlement in Glasgow. As Dixon and Durrheim (2000: 27) state, 'questions of "who we are" are often intimately related to questions of "where we are"'. Thus, in terms of spatial aspects, this section explores ASRs' experiences of *social relationships with others in the neighbourhood, living in a new locality* and *language*.

6.2.1. Locality and neighbourhood relationships

ASRs' ability to establish and maintain a relationship with their neighbours and others in the locality posed a significant spatial vulnerability. Although social bonds and bridging relationships are crucial to establishing a sense of belonging (Ager and Strang, 2004), for newcomers, it was not an easy task to build relationships with others in a new locality. Findings indicated that participants approached neighbourhood relationships in two ways: *no interaction* and *friendly interaction*.

Primarily, most of the participants reported not having regular contact with their neighbours. Bilal (M, AS, Pakistan, 40–45) explained that he often tried to hide from his neighbours and other people to avoid interaction, because he said:

> I don't know anyone here [where he lives] and other people, they won't understand me. Some might think bad about me and that is a problem. So, I don't like to stop, talk and tell them that I am an asylum seeker.

Some participants felt uncomfortable in their new locality and expressed feelings of being alienated. Avoiding interacting with others was a strategy used to respond to their vulnerable position. For them, having a safe place for themselves and their family was more important than building or having a relationship with their neighbours. Participants positioned themselves as

individuals who did not want to create tension or encounter problems with others. Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) stated:

> A lot of people don't interact [with others] because of their experience in the past. They are not open and they don't know how to interact with people. So, they are finding it extremely difficult to access any social networks that are available for them.

In another example, Mahdi (M, R, Syria, 25–30), stated:

> I feel like one of my neighbours has problems. He just deals with me in a racist way. He throws rubbish in front of my door and just tries to annoy me. Once, he [made a] complaint to the authorities that I make noise with my kids. But all the time I hear the noise coming from his house, I didn't say anything. A council officer who was responsible for me came and said lots of noise comes from your house and you have to be careful. I told him I don't make any noise. I asked, who told you? He said your neighbour. I apologised saying that I will try to do that less and try not to annoy anyone.

Finally, Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) said:

> I think it is my own personal experience … if someone is saying something bad, if you ignore it, it is better than shouting. These things are very small; so, I think we just ignore them. If you create too much height of this thing and push these things, then it becomes negative.

These examples highlighted that a sense of difference existed between the neighbours (Glaswegians and others) and participants, which separated them from others and this perceived difference was used to justify their decision to not seek meaningful relationships with neighbours. Here Mahdi**,** in one regard, avoided creating the image of him being a troublesome newcomer, because ensuring the absence of tension was more important than building a personal relationship with his neighbours. Most importantly, many participants prioritised the safety and security of their family in that locality ahead of fostering a close relationship with neighbours. This was a common pattern among ASRs who were living in so-called 'white' neighbourhoods and/or places where the majority of locals were from a different ethnicity or country.

At the same time, it was clear that several participants maintained limited friendly interaction with their neighbours. Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) stated:

> With my neighbours, we don't know each other and I realised if I don't say 'hi' to them, they are not going to say 'hi' to me. So, the first time I said hi they said hi. The next day they said 'Hi-yah! how are you?' because I said hi to them the other day. It continued, but that was my only relationship with them.

Both examples of adopted approaches involving no interaction (silence or ignorance) and a friendly interaction (just saying hi and hello) with neighbours illustrated that ASRs felt a sense of difference and separation from others in their new communities. While silence might indicate a significant vulnerability related to not belonging in their locality, friendly interaction signifies the 'normative, minimum principle of interaction among people who consider each other neighbours, and the foundation for the development of deeper neighbourly relationships that eventually form networks and communities' (Kusenbach, 2006: 291). From his perspective, saying just 'hi' and 'hello' was a friendly interaction with those proximal enough to be considered neighbours. Friendly interaction was also aimed at avoiding trouble or problems and served to show the neighbours that ASRs were adjusting to their new locality (Parker, 2018).

Meantime, there was something important to be said here about seemingly insignificant polite customary greetings like hi and hello. These seemingly routine and customary greetings seem minor but were actually quite important and significant in ASRs–host community member relationships that could assist to overcome the spatial vulnerability. These greetings were polite and established a connection and might symbolise acknowledgement and acceptance but also allowed for some maintenance of distance and security (from escalating tensions). Wessendorf (2010: 29) suggests that informal relations may ultimately 'contribute to a sense of being part of a community and being able to communicate with people who are different'. Therefore, polite customary greetings might act as a social lubricant, making the development of further amicable relationships more likely.

Nevertheless, for some, building neighbourhood relationships or social networks was limited to others with similar immigration categories. Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook (2001) highlight that preferences to interact with others similar to oneself occur based on the homophily principle, and the findings of this thesis identify that participants interact with others they consider similar to themselves, due to the differences between ASRs and locals and the associated exclusions. As Dahinden (2013) claims, structures of membership such as nationality, race and religion produce network boundaries. Participants stated that they were easily identified and labelled as asylum seekers/others in their community due to their physical characteristics such as skin complexion, clothes, poor English skills and unemployment status. Therefore, they tended to go only to places where other ASRs (who had similar characteristics) attended. Further inquiry revealed that participants referred to the ethnic composition of people and their differences in the locality as a significant cause of spatial vulnerability.

> I say hi and hello but the society here is different. People like to keep a distance, especially the local people. So people like me, refugees, most of them just socialise with their own communities. Like me, I am from Sudan, so I socialise with the Sudanese community (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

The above findings suggested that participants either actively tried not to interact or maintain a limited friendly interaction with others in their locality due to the spatial vulnerabilities created by housing (dispersal and social housing). In the first instance, therefore, some participants avoided certain people in their everyday spaces. This meant ASRs' geographical positioning hindered them from making certain acquaintances. Nevertheless, neighbourhood relationship was not the only spatial vulnerability, but lack of knowledge about their new locality itself created a significant issue.

6.2.2. A new environment and daily urban mobility

Findings revealed an important link between ASRs' urban mobility and spatial vulnerability. van Riemsdijk (2014: 963) write that migrants' mobility is 'grounded in the local through their everyday practices'. Participants confronted the question of daily urban mobility in a new environment with their

urgency and expectations of settlement, finding accommodation, satisfying everyday essential needs, making personal connections and building social networks. Simultaneously, they had to go through challenges such as unfamiliarity and a lack of information about their surroundings, issues in access to resources and inability to establish a social and spatial connectedness with their new locality. Gulzar (M, R, Sudan, 30–35) stated:

> If you look at people who are new, who have not got family, friends or people that could help them around or if you cannot speak English, it is going to be a barrier.

Although it was appreciated that the UK government was considering their asylum claim, accommodating them in a new location without any information became a challenge for them to adjust to. Scholars (Spicer, 2008; Crawley, Hemmings and Price, 2011; Kesten et al., 2011) suggest that good knowledge about the location, available resources, established community-based services and facilities are seen to be beneficial for newcomers; nevertheless, my research indicated that newly arrived people did not have good knowledge of their locality and available resources. Beth (Charity – Household support) explained further:

> I think if you went to a country where you didn't speak the language you would have no idea how the country was run. You wouldn't know who did what for you. There is a greater need for people to get clear information at the beginning of the asylum seeker process and when they become refugees, but it is obviously not working adequately.

Significantly, inadequate information about their current locality raised questions such as where they are, what the name of this place is, where they can find supermarkets, where the nearest worshipping place is, and so on. This, in turn, adversely affected ASRs' ability to address daily needs, such as buying food and other basic or essential items. Several participants explained that for cultural and religious purposes they needed to find halal products for their meals but they struggled without adequate information about the appropriate location to buy such food items. Zahir (M, AS, Iraq, 25–30) stated:

> I think that people you deal with here, like in Serco and other places [the Home Office], they should give you information

> about how to go to some places and give you everything [information] that you need. So this is what we lack here.

Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45) stated:

> It would have been nicer if they [Serco and the Home Office] had pointed me to places where I can go for groceries in the area but I never got something like that.

Additionally, participants highlighted that they were attracted to urban centres because of the concentrated economic resources, opportunities and access to social networks, and areas with a high concentration of ethnic minorities that support newcomers. They preferred to go to the city centre to visit their religious places and to meet people from their country of origin and the same ethnic groups, as well as fellow ASRs. However, being provided with inadequate information hindered their process of engaging in society and restricted their mobility in and around Glasgow.

Even if participants managed to get to know about some places, they did not know how to get to those places from their houses. Participants' experiences raised questions about the efficiency of formal social protection providers, in this case, Serco and the Home Office; how they could expect a newcomer to find the way to relevant authorities without any information. For instance, on the second day after her arrival, Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) was asked to sign in at Serco; however, the lack of information about how to get there was a barrier to her attempt to visit:

> It was difficult to go from Govan to Serco because you don't know the way to go. They want you to come on the next day and sign in Serco. How? I don't know, really. You are struggling those the first days ...

The above examples confirmed that participants' accessibility to services had been shaped by their unfamiliarity with the new locality and a lack of information. Accessibility is an individual's 'ability to reach desired goods, services, activities and destinations' (Litman, 2011:5). In this scenario, mobility is not just about moving around but rather the ability to have the knowledge and resources to be able to reach specific destinations within Glasgow. While living in Easterhouse, Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) found an

opportunity to engage in integration activities in Govan and Maryhill. Though this particular information was shared by the housing provider, a lack of detailed information prevented him from taking part in such activities. As he explained:

> [Serco] said there is an organisation in Govan. I can go there every last Thursday and Friday of the month. They do stuff [activities]. There is a men's group in Maryhill; I could go there as well. But you gave me a paper [with information] but how will I know where they are? In my phone, I don't have internet. I don't know exactly where they are. I only get internet only when I go to the library or to school. So, I cannot find these places.

Furthermore, participants felt lost in Glasgow. Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) stated:

> When I was coming out of my house, every time I thought – what is the name of the term when you don't know how to go back to your home? I asked her if she meant lost, and she replied, 'you are lost because you don't know.

In Aleea's case, she was lost geographically and linguistically, as she could not find the word 'lost' to explain being literally lost. Therefore, being a newcomer without any knowledge of their surroundings and neighbourhood areas made them feel as if they should remain confined inside their homes.

Moreover, even those who arrived in Glasgow under the specific refugee resettlement programmes and were provided with adequate state support from day one of their arrivals faced challenges to move forward in their new environment. Farid (M, R, Syria, 40–45) had a realistic view of adjusting and settling to his new environment; however, his experience suggested it was not the case for every refugee. Even though he was provided with access to all formal social protection such as accommodation, financial benefits and access to full-time education and healthcare, inadequate information from GCC about his new location and surrounding areas hindered his ability to move forward in his new locality. His experience reflected the similar challenges faced by ASRs in a new environment where participants remained vulnerable regardless of formal interventions. Farid explained further:

> No relationship [with other Syrians], no friends, no family, no history, no memory […] when we arrived here, we were taken

> from Edinburgh to Glasgow. We found everything […] they prepared my house with furniture; I had a fridge full of food and some flowers. That was good, but after that you face the problem, who we are, where we are, what we are and how we can start. There is a social worker who works with us and supports us, but this is just for one or two hours a week. It is not enough to support for you to realise where you are and how you can start. You need to discover that yourself […]

The findings highlighted that for every asylum seeker and refugee interviewed, their unfamiliarity with the new environment contributed to spatial vulnerability. The narratives emphasised that participants' perspectives of urban mobility were not only about convenience and being able to access services to have a better quality of life (such as healthcare, proper housing and education) but also about establishing their lives in their new locality. Sabates-Wheeler and Waite (2003) acknowledge that spatial dislocation, in this case, no-choice dispersal, contributes to significant spatial vulnerabilities. While they experienced uncertainty upon their arrival in relation to their asylum claims, a new environment and relocation constraints exposed them to vulnerable situations. It seems reasonable, therefore, to expect that information about their new locality should be made available to them on the day of their arrival, in order to overcome spatial vulnerability.

6.2.3. Language as a spatial vulnerability

There is adequate evidence in the existing literature for language being a significant problem for ASRs in the UK (see, for example, Phillimore, 2011; Piacentini et al., 2019 and Chapter 5 of this thesis). However, in this section, English is discussed as a contributing factor for spatial vulnerability. Even though English language proficiency has not been a mandatory requirement to claim asylum, it determined ASRs' long-term settlement and level of adjustment; possessing a good command of English was therefore crucial to their successful adaptation and settlement.

Before reflecting on the spatial vulnerability associated with language, it is useful to first explain how English proficiency helped several participants during the period of their adjustment and settlement. Alimah (F, R, Sudan, 25–30) spoke English well and was able to communicate effectively, which

helped her to quickly understand how the asylum support system works and navigate her surroundings, and this eased the process of accessing services. Most importantly, she believed that being able to speak the language contributed to her successful asylum application.

> The big barrier people face in this country is the language. Sometimes the language can lead to misunderstanding. The language is the problem. But for me, because I already know the language, I have no problem at all. I see other people who have language problems. I am still helping some of my friends who have language issues (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) also credited the relative ease of his journey with his ability to communicate with officials.

> If you can speak English, you have a better chance to pass information across and also to explain what you want and to challenge things. If you cannot, I am afraid they are going to walk over you and they will pretend as if they are listening to you, but they are not.

The excerpt below shows how vulnerable the participants were in a new locality without English skills, as they had to deal with documentation and screening, as well as the language barrier. Abeo recalled:

> I went to Migrant Help earlier today. I met this family; they don't speak English at all. They were just standing in front of the entrance door to the building. They didn't even know what to say to anyone. When I said to them you can go in, that door is open [pointing the door], they said Arabic ... And I asked, Arabic? Because they didn't understand what I was saying, they could only understand Arabic. Then a gentleman came downstairs who understands Arabic and I told him to communicate with them.
>
> After that, I entered the office and met someone there. I was able to communicate to them what I want them to know […] When this family came in, they were just standing inside the office. They don't understand English, they don't understand what to say and how to speak to people. […] So it is a problem, the communication barrier.
>
> I saw them standing so I demonstrated how they could sit down. Then they sat down and they felt welcome with my interaction. Now go to the lady, I said, but they cannot communicate. The lady asked what do you want, what language do you speak?

> They said Arabic. So, the lady now has to contact an interpreter to be able to communicate with them. Do you understand? That means the person is going to sit longer because they don't understand the language.

This example highlighted that language difficulty not only restricted their access to social protection but also created a feeling of insecurity and vulnerability in their new environment. Lack of English skills also means that they cannot transit around Glasgow and navigate the formal and informal systems without the help of others. As Abeo's experience illustrates, even though the couple arrived at the doorstep of Migrant Help, they could not move forward. Therefore, the inability to communicate in English was seen as a significant disadvantage by many participants.

Consequently, participants had to depend on the assistance of others tending to most of their needs in a new locality. Depending on others created a sense of being handicapped, because ASRs know that they cannot survive without receiving constant help from others. Fangen (2010) demonstrates that a lack of language skills creates uncertainty and feelings of humiliation amongst refugees. Therefore, the language is not just a social and cultural issue, but a significant spatial issue for many ASRs in Glasgow. As Zahir (M, AS, Iraq, 25–30) explained:

> In Iraq, I am very strong in speaking and convincing people and I have all the means of language that I can speak and the strength of language that I can speak. Here [in Glasgow], you don't know the language and you feel that weakness in front of people and you feel very uncomfortable that you need [to exert] so much effort sometimes to just make people understand an idea, and you cannot.

In summary, this section has highlighted how and why ASRs experienced spatial vulnerability due to a lack of formal support needed for them to adjust to their locality. ASRs' spatial vulnerability was primarily caused by the no-choice asylum accommodation and homeless housing process, which housed them in unfamiliar locations without any existing social networks. Participants thus faced challenges in building a relationship with others in their neighbourhood and struggled in their daily urban mobility. In particular, participants became vulnerable due to a lack of social connections in their

new locality. ASRs' lack of knowledge of and unfamiliarity with their new locality contributed to issues around urban mobility. The findings identified the importance of spatial understanding of vulnerability caused by the unavailable formal support. Additionally, the locational requirements of English for survival exposed participants to significant spatial vulnerabilities where the use of language, practicalities of mobility and access to services are entwined.

Importantly, the spatial vulnerability cannot be distinguished from socio-political determinants, and thus the next section will focus on vulnerabilities caused by socio-political issues.

6.3. Socio-political manifestations of vulnerability: Policy-imposed liminality and questions of meaningful activity

In this section, I explore the ways in which ASRs experienced socio-political vulnerabilities through policy-imposed restrictions and the dilemmas this posed in terms of their sense of belonging and settlement in Glasgow. As I outlined in Chapter 2, over the past 20 years, the UK's asylum policies showed a 'hostile environment' to ASRs in the UK (Zetter, Griffiths and Sigona, 2005; Mulvey, 2010; Burnett, 2016). Indeed, different immigration policies labelled and restricted newcomers from accessing available social protection elements, which Hynes (2009) has called policy-imposed liminality. Asylum seekers have access to NASS services with restrictions on employment and education while refugees have access to mainstream support as citizens. Nonetheless, as a result of policy-imposed liminality, asylum seekers are 'left in limbo, existing as a marginalised outsider' (Parker, 2018: 202) who 'has recently left 'there', but who are not yet allowed to be fully "here"' (Lewis, 2007b: 103); consequently, this section focuses mainly on participants' asylum experiences. Asylum seekers were the most vulnerable to discrimination in accessing services in the UK; Sabates-Wheeler and Waite (2003) indicate such discrimination as a sign of socio-political vulnerability.

Primarily, participants criticised the label 'asylum seekers' owing to its negative connotations, which was detrimental to them in their everyday lives. The way that they have been treated since day one of their arrival led them to

construct a negative perception about state support. Asim (M, AS, Sudan, 25–30) stated:

> They are taking care of me, but there are things that I cannot do, but that others [refugees] can do. I cannot work here. I am not allowed to work and this is very bad for me.

ASRs arrived in the UK with expectations of living a dignified life with safety and security; yet exclusions and restrictions on access to formal social protection hindered their ability to attain a positive adjustment experience when moving to Glasgow. In the interviews, participants reflected on the notion that a dignified life and a positive adjustment was contingent upon them being able to participate in the formal structures of their new locality. Aliyah (F, AS, Sudan, 20–25) stated:

> I think it is just that the asylum system is made to look difficult to people [asylum seekers] and is making it hard to seek help. I think it is meant to seem very difficult so that you would either just give up, or if you really want it, then you just carry on within that challenging system.

In another example, Babar's (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) narrative reflected the socio-political vulnerability asylum seekers faced:

> They have some restriction and we are not allowed to work; we don't have any kind of freedom in our life. We cannot have a plan for our future, so these things are negative. A friend told me that most people think asylum life is very easy because they are eating and they are getting given everything, but my opinion was that jail is very easy, you just go into the jail, they give you food, you can watch the TV, you can play games, you can go for the swimming, you change your clothes every day, so it is kind of jail for us because we are handcuffed. We cannot do anything by ourselves and the Home Office has so many restrictions on our life that we cannot [do anything]. So, the jail and the asylum process are same; they look the same.

These examples reflected participants' general views about the asylum support system which is controlled by the existing immigration policies. A further inquiry identified three manifestations of socio-political vulnerabilities caused by the existing support system: *limbo and temporality*, the *question of meaningful activity*, *survival* and *waiting for a normal life*.

6.3.1. Limbo and temporality: time lost and life on pause

Mapped onto the socio-political vulnerability was the temporal experiences of liminality. Temporal experiences were manifested by waiting and uncertainty caused by the policy liminalities. Rotter (2016: 81) explains that waiting is a 'universal condition which punctuates everyday life at all stages of the life course' and in waiting an 'individual plays a small part and exercises limited control' over their life. Participants' experiences and existing literature (discussed in Chapter 1) suggested that indefinite waiting time was inevitable in the UK asylum process. This section explores aspects of waiting, to provide an understanding of the specific impacts of liminal existence and temporality.

The major criticism of awaiting a decision was the quantified meaning of time lost during the process, in which participants measured the waiting time in days, months and years. During the interviews[11], most of the participants highlighted how long they had been in Glasgow:

Bokamoso (M, AS, Namibia, 30–35)	4 months
Abdo (M, AS, Sudan, 30–35)	4 months
Mustafa (M, AS, Iraq, 40–45)	1 year and 5 months
Asim (M, AS, Sudan, 25–30)	2 years and 7 months
Namazzi (F, AS, Uganda, 30–35)	6 years and 4 months
Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35)	10 years

Most of them did not know when decisions about their applications were going to be made. They apply and get a decision; if they get rejected, they apply again, appeal and get another decision. The time taken for this whole process manifested a temporal, and also a socio-political vulnerability. Participants found the uncertainty in time the most difficult part of their asylum experience in the UK (see also Vathi and King, 2013). It was indeed the story of many participants who had been waiting for several years without knowing the outcome of their asylum applications. Analogies such as feeling like the

[11] Interviews were conducted from June to September 2018

‘moving dead’ and a ‘man without a leg’ conveyed the sentiment of an asylum seeker’s life in limbo. Muhammed (M, R, Eritrea, 35–40) stated:

> Nothing’s going to change … to be honest, I am like the moving dead. I cannot work. I cannot do anything … [like] a man without a leg.

Consequently, their life in Glasgow had been suspended while they awaited a decision. While waiting, many participants expressed frustration at the thought of passing their peak age of activity without having a proper job. Being inactive for a long time was perceived to be a barrier to finding a job in the future. During the interview with Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40), she shared a friend’s experience, a middle-aged woman who used to be a teacher in Syria, who had recently received her refugee status after five years and was unable to find a job as a teacher due to the amount of time she had spent unemployed in the UK. This induced fear about what would happen to them and their families in the future. This particular situation reinforces the position of Vanstone (1982, Rotter, 2016: 87), who states that frustrations easily arise, ‘because one has no alternative to waiting, no personal action or initiative to which one can resort in lieu of that which the system, in its own time, delivers’. Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) stated:

> People who are coming to this country have a problem. Like, I spend 35 years of my life back home and now imagine I have to start from the bottom. It was just like levels. I get back to zero, sometimes to minus and imagine, how can I go up in levels.

Comments made by several participants such as *‘I don’t know what will happen tomorrow and cannot do anything’*, which reflect ‘feelings of having lost time’, illustrate ASRs’ sense of powerlessness and lack of agency. The view of powerlessness related to two particular experiences that research participants encountered. Firstly, the unpredictable and long-drawn-out nature of the decision-making process – a process to decide the future of an applicant that keeps the asylum seeker in limbo. During the waiting time, participants did not know what would happen in the future, while there was simultaneously a lack of understanding of what was happening to them in the present. Importantly, participants’ articulation of powerlessness through the interpretations of ‘not knowing’ was not only about the decision-making

process but also about understanding what is happening to them during the whole process.

> They still didn't give me a decision. So, I don't know. We don't have a legal residence [refugee status] here. We cannot work; we are staying at our home. We cannot do anything. We don't know what is going to happen. So, this is the main problem (Fabunni - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

Secondly, the findings particularly emphasised the lack of agency and powerlessness caused by asylum restrictions and associated lack of rights. Watts and Bohle (1993: 55) emphasise that 'because individuals and groups are powerless, then to the same extent their location in the "political space" of vulnerability is determined by power and institutional relations'. Undeniably, asylum seekers have several (limited) rights within the UK, such as the right to housing, financial support, healthcare and education. However, participants reflected upon numerous rights that they did not have, such as the right to work, the right to full-time study and right to own property. Although they talked about access to mainstream services, participants' focus was not only on material provisions or entitlements but also overcoming the daily struggles to live a normal life. Here, waiting has been conceptualised as a passive state because throughout the waiting time, they do not have the ability to exercise agency, choice and act purposely to build a future (Rotter, 2016). Hence, they felt extremely vulnerable only to have basic rights that brought uncertainty and temporariness. Sadie (Charity – Household support) stated:

> Someone [one of their organisation's beneficiaries] was saying: my life is on hold, you know. I was 22 when I came here, I am 32 now. My youth is gone and I am unable to develop a career and get married. He said, I don't have anything to offer anybody because I have no idea about the future. I think that uncertainty is enormous for people.

6.3.2. Question of meaningful activity

By making direct reference to the UK asylum system, participants explained that the asylum system restricted them from doing anything meaningful that would help them to become part of society. Adiel (M, AS, Namibia, 35–40) stated: *'you don't have that freedom to go to college or to work or just to keep busy. But only staying in the house sleeping, doing nothing'*. In particular,

engaging in employment or income generation activities were considered to be meaningful activities that could provide a strong platform for a meaningful life. Following up on their perceptions of ‘meaningful activity’, when asked about what they did during the day, most participants answered ‘nothing’.

Most of the research participants had been the breadwinners of their families prior to their asylum journey. Almost all of them came from societies where working for themselves and their family’s livelihood was crucial, and therefore, engaging in meaningful activity to support one’s livelihood and that of one’s family was an important part of their normal lives. However, asylum seekers were negotiating dilemmas created by their status as asylum seekers with limited and restricted rights, and the responsibilities they have towards their family.

Moreover, participants expressed that doing nothing or being economically inactive was a dilemma arising from their status as asylum seekers and their moral responsibilities. This need was rooted in their cultural and familial practices and their sense of primary social value. Therefore, participants felt that they must look after their families rather than depend on the low levels of support from the UK government. However, the current socio-political environment in the UK restricted them from employment and made them become more vulnerable.

> Since I came here, they gave me a house because I have a family; I am married and have two kids. So they gave me a flat. I have money [weekly asylum allowance] but the money is not enough. If I get my refugee status, I could work. So, I could change this Home Office [asylum] house because I don’t like it. If I could work, I could get my own flat, own things and have enough money for living (Mustafa - M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

Participants also talked about moral responsibility to contribute to their locality. They felt that working would give them opportunities to earn money and engage with locals by having a normal daily routine. Moreover, working and paying taxes were seen as a way to live a normal life and feel included in society. It emerged that these two actions were perceived to be the key characteristics of what would make them good citizens. However, participants indicated that they felt excluded and separated from their local population

because of being unable to work and contribute to the local economy. Mustafa (M, AS, Iraq, 40–45) said that the UK government was '*putting us* [asylum seekers] *in a narrow corner'* by not allowing asylum seekers to engage in income generation activities.

Furthermore, participants implied that keeping them away from the job market was a way to keep them away from society. Referring to their experiences of doing nothing most days, economic inactivity resulted in them staying indoors and mainly spending time in community organisations with several locals and other ASRs. They also had to depend on state support to survive and they would not be able to give back to the community. Therefore, when considering the economic aspect, participants justified their view that asylum seekers should be able to work because of the many positive benefits being economically active entails, since engaging in economic activity fosters greater self-esteem, self-respect, cultural pride and sense of belonging within the community.

> I am a person who likes to work, and I like to get a salary and pay my taxes. … you can get benefits for a short time, and this is from my point of view, that I can get benefits for a short time, then I can start to work and stop the benefits and pay back (Amina - F, R, Sudan, 40–45).

In this section, participants' views about engaging in meaningful activities demonstrated asylum seekers' socio-political vulnerability. Policy-level liminalities imposed on participants created disadvantages, and a protracted asylum process and state-level restrictions on employment left asylum seekers unable to fully settle in their new locality and new life. As Parker (2020) highlights, the policy restrictions and absence of meaningful activities contribute to a lack of sense of belonging among asylum seekers.

6.3.3. Waiting for a normal life: acceptance and survival

Although they have a limited control over their waiting, every participant wished to have a 'normal' life. When asked, ASRs pointed out that having a secure place and living a dignified life were key determinants of a safer and more secure life in Glasgow. However, their expectations were challenged by dilemmas between safety and restrictions, and survival within a hostile

support system. The current asylum support system created a negative image of asylum seekers and kept them within a limited formal social protection provision. Nonetheless, participants expressed their gratitude even for the current low levels of support. Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) stated:

> They are giving us houses […] They are protecting our family and helping our children with education and getting us involved in the society; so, I think it is better [than nothing].

Participants appreciated the asylum support, such as accommodation, healthcare and weekly financial allowance, all of which contributed to their feelings of safety and security. To a certain extent, the provision of these services made them feel that the government is trying to treat asylum seekers as people in need and support. Importantly, ASRs tried hard to avoid being portrayed as ungrateful, and thus they express gratitude for the support (Schuster, 2011; Kirkwood, Mckinlay and Mcvittie, 2014; Rotter, 2016).

> I didn't have any expectations when I came here. I was running from the war in my country. I was looking for a safe and good place to stay. I reached here, then I found [out about] … the rules here that support refugees. I get a lot of support from all the government offices (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

Although some participants appreciated the minimal support the Home Office provided, they could not achieve a dignified life in Glasgow. In reality, asylum seekers' daily lives became fragile due to restrictions imposed by the UK government. On the one hand, they felt inadequately provided for, while on the other hand, they did not want to be ungrateful for, or seem unappreciative of, the support they were being given. For instance, narratives demonstrated that participants viewed the limited cash support as the bare minimum to live on, yet they appreciated it. As Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) said, '*they are helping us even with a very small* [amount of] *money. They are still giving support to us'* and as Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45) stated, *'I mean, the big thing is that I don't want to seem ungrateful because I am grateful that I have gotten some help.'*

Thus, although the amount of financial support provided for asylum seekers has been considered inadequate, the provision of a cash allowance in itself is seen as a gesture of positive support from the government. Another example

was the asylum housing provided in Glasgow. Even though it was provided on a no-choice basis and criticised for being of low quality, participants appreciated the provision of accommodation. It had been pointed out that having a house to live in contributed to their positive sense of safety and security.

> In Germany, we stayed for three months in a camp. Then they gave us accommodation, but it was like a tent. […] just like a tent with no heaters, with no blankets, nothing at all and cold water. However, since we entered Britain things are very good. For example, they gave us [proper] accommodation; this is the big difference between Germany and the UK (Mustafa - M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

Therefore, within a challenging environment for ASRs, 'survival or ways of surviving' were portrayed as preferable to expecting a better quality of life in the UK. In other words, participants were aware of the restrictions imposed on them, but they had been forced to accept these restrictions. In this case, their need for ensuring their survival in new locality took precedence over the restrictions placed upon them by asylum policies that restrict their ability to integrate and take part in society in any meaningful way. For example, as Aliyah (F, AS, Sudan, 20–25) stated:

> You just keep moving. You know the places where we stay are not ideal. To be honest, it [the current accommodation and location] is very disgusting to a certain extent, yeah, but for me, it is just like a way of surviving, so I [am] OK with that.

Following on from participants' views about ensuring their survival throughout the interviews, participants stated clearly that their waiting was focused on achieving one outcome: beginning a normal life in Glasgow. As Mustafa (M, AS, Iraq, 40–45) stated *'I would like to live a normal life',* meaning a life that includes refugee status or permanent residency, eligibility to work, taking care of the family, and obtaining a home for themselves. However, it was evident from the previous discussion that the conditions of waiting imposed by asylum bureaucracy placed people's lives on hold and disrupted the normal flow of living their lives. A normal life cannot be achieved under asylum status (Stewart, 2005; Parker, 2015), and therefore the desire to have a normal life

has emerged as the main expectation of participants in this research. Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) stated:

> If I get the grant [positive asylum decision] at least, you know, if you can make plans for your life, you know, you can work, you can support your family. […] You can try to achieve your goals for your future.

Other participants made similar comments and emphasised that once they had received refugee status, they would be able to work, look after their family and contribute to society. Abdo (M, AS, Sudan, 30–35) spoke about receiving his refugee status; *'I can just have a family and continue to live with kids and live a normal life like other people'.* Additionally, they would be able to take control of their lives in terms of choosing where to live, whether to partake in further education, buy a property, and so on, thus, refugee status has been seen as the only opportunity to plan and determine their future. A positive decision (securing refugee status) would provide the opportunity for them to come out of temporariness without fears and concerns about destitution and deportation (Rotter, 2016). The refugee status and beginning of normal life might help to overcome the inactivity and exclusion faced during the waiting period.

Asylum seekers, however, face and live with a constant threat of having their claims for asylum refused, becoming destitute, being detained or deported, which emphasises the vulnerability caused by the current political climate in the UK. Most of the asylum-seeking participants were awaiting their first decision while some of them were awaiting a decision on their appeal or reapplication. While those who receive positive decisions are relieved from the fear of uncertainties and insecurities (deportation or destitution), those who received a negative decision had to go through the arduous process of appeal and re-application and continue living in fear. An appeal can be lodged if an asylum application is rejected (negative decision) at the first instance followed by the final decision on appeal, and this means that all normal routes of appeal in a country have been exhausted. The 1996 Immigration and Appeals Act restricted welfare benefits of those who appeal; they are provided with accommodation and subsistence support in the form of vouchers (Sales,

2002). Throughout the appeal or re-application process, asylum seekers (refused) became more vulnerable than those who await their first decision.

Any asylum applications can be refused and individuals could be forced to return to their home country; consequently, refused asylum seekers face added fear of deportation or detention. Stewart (2005) states fear of deportation exacerbate asylum seekers' vulnerable position. This situation was reflected when I tried to set-up an interview with Aliyah. She stated: I would be happy to meet you at the end of this week but I am going to the Home Office tomorrow for an interview and I don't know what will happen. I might be detained. We cannot even take our phones so there will be no way for communication. So, can you call me on Thursday and see? (Field note: 13.08.2018). Aliyah feared being detained without any means to communicate with others and she could not make any plans until the meeting is over.

Meanwhile, an individual's ability to appeal or re-apply depends on their ability to obtain good legal support. Green (2006) explains that refused asylum seekers had not been able to take advantage of every opportunity to appeal a negative decision and their claims had been discontinued because of a lack of legal support. If an individual managed to find good legal support, the appeal process has been protracted. The following example illustrates the extent of this process. Yet, the socio-political vulnerability and being in limbo affected their wellbeing (caused feelings of anxiety and frustration). Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35–40) stated:

> I had my first interview (2008) in Liverpool. I had a second interview after 21 days. Later, after a week, my application was refused. Then my lawyer appealed to the court and it was again refused. Then, I had to put in a fresh claim. I was refused from the Home Office, the court and five fresh claims. You have to submit new documents, statements with a lawyer five times and sent this to the Home Office, waiting like between 5 to 6 months, and I got the refusal again. The sixth time, when I put another fresh claim, I won. It took four years to get a positive decision from the day I began.

In this section, the discussion has focused on participants' experiences of liminalities that caused them socio-political vulnerability. Primary attention was paid to participants who were still waiting for a decision on their asylum

claims. Participants' major criticism about the current formal support was the restriction on employment. This situation highlighted asylum seekers' socio-political vulnerability. Furthermore, findings showed that their vulnerable position led them to suppress their criticisms in order not to appear ungrateful for the current levels of social protection provided in the UK. As a result, they had to accept minimal support to survive, which reinforced Hynes' (2011) view of policy-imposed liminality. Finally, while the findings supported asylum-seeking participants being subject to socio-political vulnerabilities (policy-imposed liminality), participants indicated that they could overcome this situation only when refugee status was granted. The following section discusses trust as a socio-cultural issue.

6.4. Trust and distrust

A common sentiment that emerged from the interviews was 'trust'. The formal support system plays a role in creating distrust among ASRs about services and service providers. Daniel and Knudsen (1995: 2) stated that 'in the life of a refugee, trust is overwhelmed by mistrust, besieged by suspicion, and relentlessly undermined by caprice'. For instance, the system of dispersing asylum seekers within the UK 'leaves little room for institutional or political trust to be restored and hinders the restoration of social trust' (Hynes, 2009: 100).

During the interviews, almost all of the participants harboured high levels of distrust towards the UK government, citing increased controls, lack of support, inconsistent information and so on. Most of the participants believed that the UK government changed asylum policies rapidly, attempting to control asylum seekers and promote voluntary return. For instance, they referred to policy changes about legal aid support, changes to in-country appeal rights, asylum seekers' ability to work, choice of their preferred location, full-time education and so forth. Gibney (2011: 2) highlights concerns about the UK government's motives to 'manipulate the chances of asylum seekers making successful claims through changes to procedural rights and entitlements'. These policy changes confused and frustrated asylum seekers and contributed to the erosion of their trust in the UK government.

> I don’t know if I can trust [the UK government] because […] they are not treating you like you are welcomed here. You know, everyone here is like you don’t have a right to come to this country. You are someone who is not welcome in this country. They were not treating me like someone in need; [rather], they were treating me like, ‘oh, another one! Just like that (Aleea - F, AS, Iraq, 35–40).

According to the participants, voluntary return and financial support were reported to be the main manipulative actions taken by the Home Office. During the asylum interviews, attempts had been made to encourage asylum seekers to voluntarily return home with financial assistance. For the participants, who had been through a precarious migration journey, giving up their asylum claims and going back to an unsafe country was not a choice. Facing such a dilemma, participants questioned the true intentions of authorities in the UK. During the interviews, several participants raised questions, such as: do they really want to consider our asylum claim? If that is the case, then why are they asking us to return home? Are they really thinking about our safety? Do they think giving money to me to return home is going to ensure my safety? Consequently, participants came to distrust the Home Office and UK government until they received their refugee status.

> I think that all asylum seekers are not satisfied with their status here because they are just waiting for a decision. In the Home Office, they said you can go back home to Iraq and we can give you money to go back home but we refused (Mustafa - M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

It also appeared that low standards of asylum support and questionable treatment detrimentally affected participants’ trust. It was also tied to the exclusionary dispersal policy and subsequent relocation to deprived areas. Fabunni (M, AS, Namibia, 30–35) stated: *‘they don’t like us to be here. That is why they are accommodating us in these poor houses’.* Consequently, participants condemned the Home Office and the government, believing that formal support providers should not treat them as people who were undeserving and unworthy of proper support. The mismatch between asylum seekers’ expectations of a better life and the negative treatment they encountered led participants to lose trust.

> The government assumed that someone like us [asylum seekers] are people with low standards and we will stay in any worse places. It is not true (Aleea - F, AS, Iraq, 35–40).

The issue of distrust arose again in relation to information dissemination. Koser and Pinkerton (2002) found that asylum seekers only trust information if the source of that information is deemed trustworthy. Similarly, my research participants also expressed their distrust about the information shared by the formal agencies and associated organisations such as the Home Office, Migrant Help and asylum housing providers. Interviewees' accounts stressed that Migrant Help cannot be trusted because of its relationship with the Home Office. Aliyah (F, AS, Sudan, 20–25) believed that Migrant Help was sharing information with the Home Office that could harm her asylum application. Hence, having an association with untrustworthy agencies was a concern for the participants. Making light of a serious issue, Aliyah said, *'you know, this is opposite to the saying 'the enemy of my enemy is a friend*, *here a friend of my enemy is my enemy'*; which aptly expresses the distrust felt for organisations that work closely with the Home Office.

Distrust was also the result of information not being shared by the authorities. For instance, Aliyah believed that information about Section 4 benefit was purposely withheld from her after a failed asylum application. According to the Section 4 regulations, a failed asylum seeker should be provided with Section 4 support if 'the person has made an application in Scotland for judicial review of a decision in relation to their asylum claim' (Home Office, 2018: 9). However, she claimed to be unaware of such support.

> Regarding this Section 4 benefit, I didn't know that because the Home Office didn't tell me, but then I spoke to my friend and she asked, are you getting benefits? Then she told me, you can apply for it. They don't promote it; they don't promote the rights of asylum seekers and refugees (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25).

Therefore, considering the issue of trust, participants preferred to trust non-state organisations and social networks to gather information. During the interviews, it emerged that participants regarded social networks as trustworthy even though the information shared could not be verified. They learned from their friends and social networks and built mistrust based on

shared information. For instance, Mahdi (M, R, Syria, 25–30) stated that he learned more from his friend's experience about how the system works and so he did not believe it was providing equal opportunities for everyone based on the information shared by his social network.

Moreover, a significant finding was the distrust associated with the use of unknown interpreters as an intermediary between the asylum seekers and the relevant stakeholders. Several participants stated that not being able to interact with the person on the other side of the phone created suspicion and thus, they tended to distrust the system. The formal support system had been viewed with suspicion because asylum seekers had been connected with someone nameless and anonymous, and were then required to share information with that person to progress their claim.

> How will I communicate even though there is an interpreter? [He or she] is someone I don't see, someone I don't know So, how I will be able to express myself to that individual that I didn't even see? Do you know what I mean? So the person might be speaking my local language and, yeah, I will communicate but will I be able to open up about everything? If I have a good relationship with somebody then I can open up and say you know what, this is my problem, this is what I need to do but I don't know how to do it. But who is this stranger [telephone interpreter]? I have to be careful, you know (Abeo - M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45).

Several participants further questioned how they could share their stories and be truthful if they did not know anything about the interpreter. From a cultural and social perspective, they preferred to interact with this person face to face rather than at a distance over the phone. This was a huge struggle for them because they were unable to share everything completely over the phone, which resulted in a lack of interaction and information. Indeed, participants claimed it was all about the trust; they suspected that the Home Office, as well as any other statutory agencies, would use interpreters to gather information to use against them in their asylum process.

In this section, I presented participants' views of trust and its contributions to their vulnerable position. Participants questioned the way ASRs had been treated and criticised the formal support system for controlling them. The

levels of support provided, information dissemination, word-of-mouth and experiences of dealing with services providers caused distrust.

While there were distinct examples of different dimensions of vulnerability experiences, participants' experiences suggest that these dimensions significantly shaped ASRs' psychosocial wellbeing. The next section therefore focuses on the psychosocial wellbeing of participants.

6.5. Psychological wellbeing

A combination of spatial, socio-political, socio-cultural vulnerabilities and temporal experiences affected ASRs' wellbeing. Participants shared distressing and traumatic experiences of their journeys to the UK. Even upon arriving in the UK, they encountered a hostile environment, which mainly affected their mental health. There is a considerable amount of literature reporting the multiple wellbeing and mental health challenges ASRs have faced in Scotland (Quinn, 2014; Strang and Quinn, 2014, 2019; Mulvey, 2015). In particular, studies on refugee mental health and wellbeing emphasise the role of post-migration experiences, such as a lack of formal social protection (e.g. a lack of stable housing or economic opportunity) (Mulvey, 2015), asylum experiences (Strang and Quinn, 2019), discrimination, racism and stigma (Quinn, 2014). This section therefore focuses on psychological impacts and wellbeing issues caused by the available social protection system.

According to participants, their status as asylum seekers challenged every aspect of their daily experiences in Glasgow. In particular, it affected their expectations of living a healthy and normal life, accessing services, and engaging in and contributing to their local community. During the asylum process, participants were anxious and preoccupied, and they could not prioritise their wellbeing. This was reflected in participants' narratives when they said that they considered a healthy life as being an outcome of having settled legal status, and yet, wellbeing remained an issue even upon receipt of refugee status. While some participants shared positive views of refugee status, they still struggled due to a lack of employment opportunities, as a result of encountering bureaucratic barriers and other associated problems.

> Everything is easy when you get the paper [refugee status]. This is most important when you live here – without that paper life is hard (Muhammed - M, R, Eritrea, 35–40).

However, time spent waiting for a decision, alongside the restrictions on formal social protection challenged participants' wellbeing causing anger, frustration and stress (see also Vathi and King 2013). During the interviews, I observed that the degree of psychological problems that occurred during the waiting period had been exacerbated by the duration of waiting. When one asylum seeker was asked about the time he had been waiting for a decision, he said 'mmm, one year' and then a refugee who was also present exclaimed 'one year? It is nothing! I waited five years and I went through a lot'. She then outlined her resulting depression and feelings of frustration. Another woman, Namazzi (F, AS, Uganda, 30–35), added *'I have been waiting for six years and still did not hear anything from the Home Office'*. Participants' experiences suggested that waiting for an asylum decision and going through the asylum process had been emotionally draining and anxiety-inducing because there was no certainty over when the decision would be made and what the decision would be.

> I think as an asylum seeker, you still don't know what happens … you wake up in the morning [and wait] for the postman to deliver the letter. It's a bit scary when you wait to see the letter (Flora - F, Refugee, Cameroon, 35–40).

Fear of a negative decision was caused by three significant aspects. First, the existing asylum policies discourage people from seeking asylum while encouraging them to return to their countries of origin. Second, participants had been mentally affected by word-of-mouth stories of other asylum seekers in Glasgow. Most of the time, the news about refused asylum claims/negative decisions had been shared around more easily and much faster than positive decisions; thus, many felt frustrated and stressed. Third, participants compared themselves with other asylum seekers and this produced a sense of anxiety and feelings of negativity. For instance, Takudzwa (M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45) explained that all his friends who applied for asylum along with him had been granted refugee status. He asked, *'why are they not*

accepting my application? Why? We came together and we are here for the same reason'.

> There are differences in dealing with people. Sometimes a man or person that comes here has the same circumstances as me but he gets things before me and I have to wait. This long time of waiting for anything you applied for is very bad (Asim - M, AS, Sudan, 25–30).

Another issue that exacerbated participants' wellbeing was living with continuous uncertainty. Asylum seekers were kept in a state of limbo while awaiting a decision about their asylum claims in the UK. During the interviews, participants raised the issue of anxiety arising as a result of living with uncertainty: '*it is very difficult because you don't know what is going to happen tomorrow'* (Jamshed - M, R, Iran, 45–50). Aisha (NHSGCC) also highlighted that:

> … people who were asylum seekers and refugees, they were prone to many health issues. Their stress level is so high but their priorities are the visas [leave to remain]. So, the health came underneath that or health was not on top of their agenda.

Living in limbo without any assurances of a successful asylum claim, asylum seekers exhibited distress when pointing out the services that they could not access and in raising how this prevented them from looking forward to and planning for the future.

> I didn't know where I have to go and what I have to do. Then there was some cash every week, around £35. What can I do with that? Stressful, really, really, really stressful because we didn't know what was going to be happening next (Farhad - M, R, Iran, 35–40).

The perceived possibility of destitution also exacerbated anxiety among those who had been awaiting a decision. This is because a negative decision could result in homelessness without any financial support and welfare restrictions. In 2018, Serco, the asylum housing provider, implemented lock changes and eviction of those who failed in their asylum applications. The asylum accommodation comes under the un-devolved context; the Scottish Government or GCC would not know when asylum seekers would be evicted and could not provide shelters for those upon their eviction. These

experiences made asylum seekers feel frustrated; thus, waiting time was revealed to have played an important role in shaping asylum seekers' psychological wellbeing.

Similar to the findings of other studies (Spicer, 2008; Liebling et al., 2014; Strang and Quinn, 2014; Mulvey, 2015; Kearns et al., 2017), temporality and uncertainty about the future always came with an increased feeling of isolation. Firstly, temporal vulnerabilities hindered asylum seekers from taking control of their lives; for example, making choices regarding their preferred locations and living conditions. Secondly, the feeling of isolation arose from the difficulties and challenges of waiting for a long time without entitlement to work and with a limited weekly allowance. Sadie (Charity – Household support) shared some experiences of asylum seekers who attended her organisation activities:

> What [asylum seekers] are going to do is just stare at the four walls and worry about their Home Office [asylum] case and not know when it is going to end. It is just torture for people awaiting a decision.

While scholars emphasise the impact that living with uncertainty has on the mental health of asylum seekers (Kearns et al., 2017), uncertainty further affected their lives as refugees in Glasgow. Participants felt frustrated at the lack of opportunities to move forward.

> It was just stress because of the system. It was not only asylum seekers but refugees; they were struggling more than the people born here. People didn't even understand it. You go here and there in this big city but nothing worked out. It was a challenge. You think when you are a refugee you were all sorted, but don't be [prematurely] happy, there is a life waiting for you to make you feel sorry for yourself (Danso - M, R, Congo, 35–40).

Unemployment was considered as a factor and also an outcome of poor integration and inclusion. Most of the participants worked for many years in their countries of origin, and their employment was associated with having self-respect, independence, a sense of belonging and a feeling of contributing to society. It was clear from the interviews that paid employment could contribute to an individual's sense of self-worth and cultural pride, and is 'a significant source of empowerment' (Da Lomba, 2010: 424). Expressions of

‘sleeping and doing nothing’ reflected their liminal situation and emphasised the sadness that arose in the absence of other meaningful activities while awaiting a decision on their asylum claims. Therefore, participants did not feel they could achieve a positive adjustment and a sense of belonging due to significant restrictions placed on them. Bokamoso (M, AS, Namibia, 30–35) stated:

> It is nice country It is a nice place. The only problem is that I just sleep every day, wake up, and then sleep again instead of having something to do.

Furthermore, a consideration of the role of power dynamics was central to examining how individuals are made vulnerable by formal structures (Quesada et al, 2011). Most importantly, the stress that asylum seekers went through due to the hostile asylum process hindered their ability to maintain their wellbeing. As Kearns et al. (2017**)** highlighted**,** the way the asylum seekers had been forced to live during their asylum process affected their mental health in the following years. Although they could access primary healthcare and mental health services, it was evident that they were living in an environment that negatively affected their wellbeing. Asylum seekers often experienced negative treatment from the statutory service providers. Dalilah (F, AS, Egypt, 30–35) talked in detail about the stress associated with the new locality, and the associated challenges of being a single mum, plus the role of the Home Office in exacerbating her stress.

> I needed to sign in … even if it snows or if one of my kids are sick. One day my kid was sick and it was snowing. So, I just phoned them and told them that I am in the flat and they said, no, you have to come to sign. You have to go in and sign even it is very cold, snowing or anything. This was stressful.

For refugees, obtaining their legal status did not completely eradicate the problems they encountered. Participants were perceived as problematic, and service providers, in turn, became hostile towards them. Participants considered certain statutory service providers as aggressive and hence tried to avoid further interactions. Participants described how their labels resulted in them receiving poor treatment. Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) talked about his anxiety when visiting the Jobcentre. He perceived that his failure to find a job,

and telling the staff that he had not secured employment, could lead them to think of him as someone who was less worthy of their time and assistance. His perception of being looked down upon changed his level of engagement and increased his feelings of anxiety because he had little control over the process, while service providers had power over him and his circumstances.

> You got to the point of getting upset. They [the Jobcentre's work coaches] would ask you to do those things, which would be impossible for you. So you suffer; you did not even want to go there. You would be like, oh my God, today I am going to this Jobcentre, oh my God, my God, please help me. So you are under pressure and stress (Danso - M, R, Congo, 35–40).

Furthermore, the more they stressed about their asylum process there were fewer chances of them building networks and making friends. Several participants said that there was little point in making friends, building networks or investing in their future in Glasgow. Over this period, they focused on surviving without family (some of them had left family members back in their home countries), friends and community support. Although they were living in a Glaswegian society, they excluded and restricted themselves from participating in society. As Asim (M, AS, Sudan, 25–30) explained:

> I have been here for many years and I didn't see my family. I want to reunite with my family and I want to see my family. These are things that I don't get here.

Some participants opted out of being involved in gatherings that charities organised to avoid being exposed to conversations about asylum issues and having negative thoughts, since involvement in such activities often led to discussions with other asylum seekers about negative decisions and problems. Negative conversations reminded them of their hardship and added to their stress.

> I feel afraid now because I don't know whether they will accept my asylum status. Maybe after two months, I will sleep on the street. Maybe I may not get it (Zahir - M, AS, Iraq, 25–30).

Meantime, participants expressed their preference to spend more time in RCOs because they felt comfortable and welcomed there. However, it emerged that for some participants, spending more time in such organisations

was a continuous reminder of the absence of meaningful activity in their life and in the community at large. As stated above, the one and only meaningful activity for many participants was employment/work. Although they had opportunities in the community organisations to engage and build rapport with locals and other ASRs, spending time with community organisations was also seen as doing nothing.

> I can go to that organisation. I can go, just sit, get coffee from them and drink but nothing else (Abdo - M, AS, Sudan, 30–35).

Participants' narratives illustrated that elements of the social protection system could adversely affect ASRs' psychosocial wellbeing through circumstances arising from a lack of formal support and migrant-specific vulnerabilities. Findings reflect that the asylum process is the main impact factor linking uncertainty, temporariness and destitution. Additionally, participants' psychosocial wellbeing was affected due to their inability to look after themselves or generate income to live a dignified life and take care of their families. Discrimination and racism also worsened their situation. The rest of this section explores participants' *experiences of discrimination and racism* in Glasgow.

6.6. Experiences of discrimination and racism

Discrimination and racism emerged as an important theme in shaping ASRs' daily experiences in Glasgow that had a significant influence on participants' wellbeing. Essed (1991) states that the expression of prejudice and displays of discriminatory behaviour is embedded in people's daily lives. Even though participants described Glasgow as a welcoming city, they did discuss a sense of otherness and discrimination.

Participants outlined three distinct ways of how everyday experiences negatively affected them. Firstly, the reception of poor formal support. There were ample narratives from the research participants to describe the poor levels of formal social protection provided by the state, as has been discussed in Chapter 5. Scholars show how the UK asylum system has been grounded on the notion of asylum seekers as underserving and bogus (Sales, 2002; Schuster and Bloch, 2005; Mulvey, 2015). In particular, asylum policies were

introduced with several restrictions and limitations to formal social protection, such as exclusion from formal employment and forced destitution via low support. Consequently, participants assumed that their status as ASRs led to everyday discrimination.

Secondly, their wellbeing was affected by receiving direct insults or maltreatment from service providers. While some participants shared positivity about the level of formal social protection, most of them displayed a lack of willingness to engage and felt the negative effects on their wellbeing that institutional discrimination caused. For instance, Tenneh (F, R, Sierra Leone, 25–30) stated:

> The problem for me was reporting to the Home Office all the time. That was very hard for me and stressful always going to report at the Home Office. So scaring.

Consequently, the negative experiences in the statutory service provision made participants vulnerable by having a knock-on effect on their wellbeing.

> Sometimes you didn't understand why you should sign. You didn't do anything wrong (Fabunni - M, AS, Namibia, 30–35).

> Like it or not, there is lots of racism in Scotland. There is lots of racism in any society I suspect. So sometime people wouldn't get as good service as they should because the people dealing with them didn't want to help them (Beth – Charity – Household support).

Participants suffered through incidents that had a lasting impact on their wellbeing. They felt humiliated and frustrated by incidents that reinforced otherness and everyday racism. Although there were many examples of inclusive and integration practice around Glasgow, ASRs were not entirely included in everyday society. Amina (F, R, Sudan, 40-45) shared an example of an incident she faced, which affected her wellbeing.

> I went to Primark to exchange a jacket I bought for my husband. It was just different size. I wanted a different size because he lost weight and I need just a smaller one. The cashier just started to check everything in the jacket and smelled that jacket. That was very embarrassing a very bad thing. Why did she smell the jacket and why look at the jacket and check the jacket? I have the right to exchange it. I could have given her a

> good strong lesson but I could not. I was very angry but I could not tell her.

Thirdly, participants faced everyday racism in different settings but they feared to report it. Many of them considered themselves as having little agency because reporting incidents of discrimination and racism could undermine their access to social protection. ASRs should be able to report hate crimes to a housing officer within a local authority and not have to go straight to the police. However, individuals were scared of reporting it because of the fear of losing their homes. Asylum seekers especially were in the most vulnerable position as they do not have control over their accommodation:

> '… especially if they are asylum seekers, they didn't want to cause any kind of fuss because they are worried that it will affect their application. They live with it, which was not necessarily the Scotland we would want' (Holly - COSLA).

Institutional discrimination and racism in everyday society often led to significant negative feelings of distrust. Participants assumed that their labels as ASRs could attract suspicion and create mistrust about their claims. In other words, they perceived that their claims would not be trusted due to their immigration status.

> The area where I am staying was not good. One night, I was going back home and someone, a man, scared me, you know, like "oooh" [participant demonstrated I was scared so much. Yeah and another time … there was racism. [I asked her if she made a formal complaint?] No, I didn't. What should I say to them, because I didn't have any proof (Aleea - F, AS, Iraq, 35–40).

Therefore, several participants downplayed incidents involving racism as something normal and expected. Nevertheless, racial discrimination created a feeling of insecurity that contributed to poor wellbeing. Poor wellbeing, in turn, shaped their ability to integrate and think about their future in Glasgow.

> Sometimes some people behave strangely. It was not my problem and I didn't care. Some people look down at you. When you have refugee status, they look down at you. When I claimed asylum they look down on me. Some people were racist, but that was normal human nature. We look different, we didn't

> belong here. We have to accept that (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

> I am in a foreign country – people were not my people. Obviously, someone would feel threatened, like what is she doing here? I am sorry to say they were just racist. You can feel the discrimination. You can feel like you can tell if they could, they would kill you and throw you back in your country. That was literally how I felt (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25).

> There was always going to be wee people who didn't like people for whatever reason whether or not we understand that, that was the reality of life (Holly - COSLA).

The analysis has identified participants' experiences of racism and discrimination, which they encounter daily in Glasgow. The findings reported three aspects of discrimination and racism: inadequate formal support, everyday incidents of discrimination and racism, and normalising racism and discrimination. Significantly, for participants, the primary source of discrimination was the systematic restrictions to services the system imposed and a lack of formal support. However, some participants were reluctant to raise concerns or downplayed racist and discriminatory incidents due to their fear of inciting tension between them and locals. Notably, some of them referred to their identity as outsiders and normalised racist and xenophobic attitudes of locals.

6.7. Conclusion

Zelenev (2009: 8) emphasises 'no social group in society is inherently vulnerable' but they become vulnerable due to multiple sources and manifestations of vulnerability. This chapter has outlined the ways in which ASRs experienced vulnerability in their stages of adjustment and settlement in Glasgow. As scholars indicated, individual ASRs are vulnerable in everyday encounters of social, economic, political and cultural aspects (Stewart, 2005; Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). In particular, findings identified that the UK's asylum and immigration policies significantly increased ASRs' vulnerabilities. In particular, the primary cause of ASRs' vulnerabilities is the denial of rights within and between the political, social, economic and cultural domains (see

for example (Watts and Bohle, 1993; Stewart, 2005). Asylum seekers became vulnerable from the day of their asylum claims in the UK and continue to be affected in their current situation in Glasgow. Dispersal to a new location without adequate information made the participants feel isolated and lost. This hindered participants from engaging in normal daily activities. The unfamiliarity of the new environment, lack of information and the language barrier played key roles in ASRs' experiences in Glasgow.

In addition, socio-political restrictions imposed on asylum seekers contribute to spatial vulnerabilities. In terms of spatial vulnerabilities, it appeared that participants had placed more importance on ensuring their safety and security rather than building relationships with neighbours. ASRs as vulnerable people in a new environment focused on conflict avoidance rather than interacting with others, which might lead to conflicts with locals. Specifically considering ASRs' need for informal social protection, the unfavourable environment could result in lack of access to social protection. This emphasises that the location of ASRs could actively produce vulnerabilities.

Throughout this research, *temporariness and liminality* have emerged as key causes of vulnerability. Inability to understand and predict the asylum process and future decisions led to exacerbated anxiety and frustration about their future in Glasgow (Stewart, 2005). In particular, while awaiting a decision, asylum seekers felt insecure and powerless and unable to establish a secure future in Glasgow. Their key concern was the expectations they had to engage in meaningful activities in order to live a normal life. Regardless of their immigration status, participants highlighted that engaging in meaningful activity (economic activity) and contributing to society were considered good practices of good citizens. This showed their intent to be active individuals in society rather than passive recipients of support. However, socio-political barriers prevented them from being active citizens and planning for the future.

While asylum seekers' vulnerable position is derived from their uncertain and temporary asylum status, refugees continued to encounter vulnerabilities due to social and economic dilemmas. Although they have access to welfare benefits as a citizen, the vulnerabilities associated with their immigration background could hinder access to welfare benefits and other support. The

findings suggest that ASRs remain at risk following their arrival in Glasgow and after their refugee status, and continue to need formal support.

Overall, ASRs' adjustment and settlement were primarily affected by migrant-specific vulnerabilities created by the current social protection mechanism. As stated above, ASRs are not inherently vulnerable but they became vulnerable due to spatial, socio-political and socio-cultural restrictions. Therefore, the findings suggest that ASRs *simultaneously experience multiple vulnerabilities in their day-to-day lives*. An important fact to be noted here is that an individual's initial vulnerabilities are simply replaced by new forms of vulnerability. These findings raised questions about how integration from day one of arrival could occur successfully if there are multiple vulnerabilities that are not addressed.

7. Promoting Integration and Inclusion: The Role of Social Protection

7.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on ASRs and how access to social protection shapes their integration and inclusion in Glasgow. While exploring the role of various forms of social protection, this chapter further illustrates the importance of social protection assemblages. Section 7.2 examine ASRs' and service providers' views of integration and inclusion. ASRs and the receiving society are the two parties involved in integration and inclusion, and the interaction between these two parties defines and decides the integration process outcomes. Considering the focus of this research, more attention is given to exploring ASRs' views and opinions of integration and inclusion in Glasgow. Section 7.3 of this chapter focuses on the routes and support for integration. The discussion here illustrates how formal and informal social protection elements facilitate ASRs' integration and inclusion in Glasgow. Undoubtedly, the way these routes shape and influence ASRs' integration and inclusion is complex and challenging. Finally, in section 7.4, the barriers to successful integration and inclusion are discussed.

7.2. Understanding integration

Integration is recognised as a process of mutual accommodation between newcomers and the host society members that enable ASRs to fully participate in society (Berry, 2005; Ager and Strang, 2008). Spicer's (2008: 491) study suggests social inclusion as 'a number of place-specific factors, including security, access to inclusive local resources and services, and migrants' ability to form supportive social networks'. Integration and social inclusion requires the host society and newcomers to be open to integration and for the host community to be more welcoming towards ASRs. Consequently, attitudes of service providers and the openness of ASRs towards being involved in integration and inclusion are crucial in understanding the process particularly in relation to the role of social protection. In this research, four significant views of integration emerged from

the interviews: *integration as a set of policies, integration as satisfying needs, integration as a set of behaviours and integration as a set of feelings.* Integration as a policy goal and as a two-way process that starts from the day of ASRs' arrival in Scotland was highlighted during interviews. The primary view on integration was raised in comparison to the UK and Scottish integration policies. While the UK government focuses on empowering refugees to become 'full and equal citizens' (Cheung and Phillimore, 2013: 2), the Scottish approach stresses that newcomers (asylum seekers and refugees) should benefit regardless of their length of residence or the length of the process (short- or long-term) (Scottish Government, 2018). It also recognises that ASRs come with an inherent need to feel safe and secure and have people to support them when they arrive. Ager and Strang (2008) highlight the importance of a safe and secure environment. The Scottish integration initiatives further focus on empowering ASRs as individuals to exercise their choices in such a way that they can access the services they want and need at a time appropriate for them. Integration, therefore, is a policy goal that facilitates economic, social, cultural, and civic participation and an inclusive sense of belonging.

Holly (COSLA) stated:

> In Scotland … we do have a policy that asylum seekers are welcomed from day one and we want to begin integration around what we would call integration from day one… [For] people to build a life, feel safer and move on from trauma, the Scottish approach ensures the provision of a safe home, some income, safety for your family, and so on.

Maya (Connected Communities Division, Scottish Government) stated:

> It wouldn't be appropriate to just throw refugees in and expect them to understand the UK bureaucratic service provision but equally, you have then got to figure out where and how to shift between providing support to people, so they can access services that they need and enabling and empowering them.

Over the past decade, the Scottish Government has embraced a bottom-up two-way approach to integration with local and national level collaboration. However, it cannot be generalised that integration is seen only as a two-way

process; there were also signs of a one-sided, top-down approach to integration. A local NGO staff member stated (Anonymised as per the participant's request):

> Scotland is now your new country; the UK is your new country. You need to integrate. We don't tell you to take off your scarf. We don't tell you to stop praying or something but if you want to be part of this society, you need to adapt to a few things. You need to speak in English.

This narrative explicitly presented an example of assimilation where integration cannot be seen as a two-way process, but rather 'a one-sided process in which refugees and immigrants must adapt to the host society' (Da Lomba, 2010: 418). This perspective exacerbates the negative perceptions of ASRs in Glasgow. In particular, the assimilationist perspective demands ASRs adopt the customs of the Scottish or Glaswegians that were brought forward through cultural representations. The above narrative was an example to highlight that though there were initiatives for a two-way integration approach, assimilationist perspective still exists in Glaswegian society.

Meanwhile, integration and inclusion have been considered as satisfying ASRs' needs: their opportunities to access formal social protection and degree of support. Access to formal support was significant because as soon as ASRs arrived in Glasgow, they had to establish themselves in a new society and this involved a physical, social and cultural sense of acceptance. Many participants highlighted the importance of equal opportunities in order to integrate in their new society such as having a proper house, easy access to healthcare facilities, and employment opportunities, which could help them earn a stable income, support their families and develop skills. Referring to their vulnerable situation in a new locality, access to formal social protection emerged as being vital in giving them a sense of belonging because it made participants feel accepted and included in the local community. Amina (F, R, Sudan, 40–45) stated: '*I felt like one of them, the people here, one of the societies here… because I have a house and get benefits like others here'.* It has to be pointed out that asylum seekers are denied access to some forms

of formal social protection that refugees and others in society can access (see Chapters 5 and 6). Therefore, ASRs should have equal access to mainstream services, and necessary actions should be taken to facilitate ASRs' access to services (Phillimore and Goodson, 2008).

> Integration is all about access to services. People will not integrate if they don't have a house because first of all, we need a place to live. Then, I know I cannot work now because of my status but imagine having a job… then you will be a part of the active society… Specifically, I believe education is the key. I am currently studying and it opened up many things especially the amount of information I got. So, integration means having access to basic support (Abeo – M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45).

Nevertheless, for some, integration is not about access to formal support. Takudzwa (Male, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45) said *'house, education and healthcare are not integration; they are human rights and everyone should get them… employment is integration'*. For participants like him, integration involves trying hard to be accepted, gaining recognition and being a part of their new society through engaging in local activities, but primarily securing a job and income. The UK government's approach suggesting 'paid work as the path to social inclusion' and employment is the most important aspect of structural integration because it provides 'opportunities to regain confidence and economic independence' (Cheung and Phillimore, 2014: 521). Integration is therefore a set of behaviours dependent upon ASRs' ability to demonstrate their participation in society primarily by securing employment. Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35–40) shared his frustration and questioned integration due to his inability to find a job and contribute to society:

> Integration means I have equal [opportunities]... In my experience, I don't think that really happens and I cannot understand. For example, over the last four months, when I have applied for so many jobs, I never get any job offers. I think there is something wrong because I cannot find out how this is happening. I don't understand how I cannot get a better job despite having a British qualification and work experience. Integration does not make sense now.

Nevertheless, the gap between policy and practice significantly shaped ASRs' participation in society. ASRs typically faced a hostile environment in the UK and experienced exclusion and a lack of autonomy in their daily lives.

Although the Scottish Government introduced and implemented actions to create easy access to social protection, ASRs still face difficulties accessing them. For instance, while ASRs have been provided with opportunities to enhance their learning and develop skills for the labour market, their background as ASRs negatively affected their chances of gaining employment. Integration and inclusion depended on reception, acceptance and the level of participation in their new localities both while waiting for a decision on their asylum applications and after the refugee status.

> Maybe if asylum seekers are allowed to work, they would feel more like being involved with the services because they can relax a bit on their income, preserve dignity through the income and maybe it helps them feel more able to participate in our society (Summer, British Red Cross).

Integration could also be possible through the co-existence of different groups of people from local mainstream and ASR communities who interact and share their cultures with each other. As discussed in Chapter 3, informal social protection provided via friends, families and informal networks are significant for ASRs' social protection needs. Strang and Quinn (2019) state that social connections, especially social bonds and bridges, are significant for a newcomer's ability to integrate into their society. For some participants, integration is therefore: *'interacting with people, finding a way and bringing people together'* (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25); it is *'… how you live and speak to people here and how can you deal with people'* (Jamal - M, R, Syria, 55–60) *and 'involving* [oneself] *in society'* (Fatima - F, R, Syria, 45–50).

Furthermore, integration was not just about the interaction with local community members but also those who represent (or work) as public service providers, authorities and organisations. Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) stated:

> … you talk to me about integration; people like me are coming here but are we welcomed here or not? No. Most of the time, no. Even when you get on to the bus sometimes the driver looks at you in a way like 'why are you even here?' They just change their face like [frowns], ask for the money and give you the ticket; they treat you not nice. Then one time, I told the driver I have £4.50 in my hands and waited for his reply. He got annoyed and said, 'put it inside; you know the machine'. Another time, I put it inside and the driver said, 'you don't put it inside,

> first, you have to count'. Come on, let me know Do I have to put it first or count first? You know, they just treat you differently and badly so you know that you are not welcome.

Indeed, differences between the mainstream community members and newcomers (ASR community) influenced participants' interaction with others (Chapter 6). Ineffective neighbourhood relationships and negative public attitudes towards ASRs represented considerable barriers to inclusion and integration (Spicer, 2008; Crawley, 2010). Although Glasgow is seen as a welcoming society because of the positive images about ASRs portrayed by the media, the Scottish Government and general community, they felt vulnerable at times. A lack of interaction led to increased uncomfortableness between ASRs and the local people from the initial stages of their dispersal and settlement (Chapter 6).

Integration is also the elimination of feelings of otherness in society and bringing a sense of belonging. Othering is a sign of not having access to support, safety and services (Robinson, 2014). Scholars state that the feeling of othering often indicates ASRs are denied agency and independence (Hickman, Crowley and Mai, 2008; Robinson, 2014). ASRs are expected to build a future where they could live peacefully in a society without feeling excluded: or as Alimah (F, R, Sudan, 25–30) stated, ***'****Integration is like you feel like you belong to the society or part of the society'.* TSOs also reflected a similar point of view of being welcoming and creating inclusive practices for ASRs. Not welcoming new people to Glasgow could be counterproductive considering ASRs' wish to have a friendly working society. Thus, interviewees said that not being friendly and helpful to newcomers may result in *'indecisive disaster in the future'*. It directly relates to the restrictive migration policies that produce a reinforcing cycle of social exclusion against ASRs (e.g. Immigration and Asylum Act 1999), which could hinder the engagement and active involvement of people seeking asylum, which could lead to community tensions (Robinson and Reeve, 2006).

> [I]ntegration is a strange thing because it doesn't mean we are all friends and go out together every Friday night, and it means people feel accepted and [have a sense of] belonging but still

> retain elements of their own culture: multi-cultural Scotland (Beth, Charity – Household support).

Findings further suggested that the outcomes of integration and inclusion cannot be quantified or measured because of the differences among ASRs. At some point, participants found it difficult to indicate appropriate outcomes to represent their level of integration and inclusion. ASRs' individual experiences and views, and service providers' contributions through their service provision shaped understanding of integration. For instance, asylum seekers' situations cannot be compared with the refugees' level of integration and inclusiveness in Glasgow. Though Ager and Strang (2004) consider housing, education, healthcare and employment as some of the key indicators, not all conventional indicators of integration are applicable to asylum seekers, for example, social benefits and employment. A recent report on indicators of integration also acknowledges this position of ASRs, as authors emphasise that integration cannot be measured using a single indicator (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019). When asked about integration, Flora (F, R, Cameroon, 35–40) stated:

> That is a good question [laughed] but I cannot give you one solid answer. I might be wrong but I would like to say integration is a feeling. You cannot materialise it. Having a house is not integration; it is when I feel I am living in my home. Oh! For example, in the integration networks where I attend group activities, we had some discussion and people said talking to others in the women's groups is integration, but I don't think so. Just talking is not integration; we should feel that connection.

During their daily encounters in Glasgow, participants tried to answer several questions in terms of their integration and inclusion: Who are we? Where are we? What can we do? What are our rights and responsibilities? They attempted to answer these questions through a new and unpredictable or uncertain everyday life in Glasgow. As many interviewees explicitly expressed in Chapter 6, they were living with the bare minimum from the day of arrival. Notably, asylum seekers had been surviving with a lack of support from the government until a positive decision because the refugee status could bring them a more certain future. During this process participants lost their normal life in the past; in other words, they lost their self-identity, place identity,

community, friends, families, autonomy, rights and entitlements. Therefore, for every participant, integration and inclusion was all about building a future and living a normal life. Although Mahdi (M, R, Syria, 25–30) thought negatively about integration due to struggles in finding a job, when he was questioned further, he suggested how integration might be achieved:

> [When] I live here like a normal person. [When] I feel that I am happy about all these things. There must be other things in our life. Just to live a normal life like other people.

This section presented participants' views on integration, which they have defined as a set of policies, satisfying needs, a set of behaviours and a set of feelings. While the staff from service providing organisations emphasised the policy goals of integration from the day of arrival and a two-way approach, ASRs presented integration as being connected to neighbourhood relationships, participation and contribution to society, opportunities to access mainstream services, living a normal life and overcoming otherness in society. Moreover, the findings indicated that the outcomes of integration cannot be quantified, due to immigration status differences and individual's views and experiences of ASRs. Within this background, the next section will illustrate the different ways in which available social protection facilitated and promoted integration and inclusion of ASRs in Glasgow.

7.3. Pathways to integration and inclusion

ASRs' views and opinions revealed that integration is subjective and is shaped by their experiences and background. Indeed, integration is shaped by different aspects to varying degrees for different people, and these different aspects operate together within the integration process, involving formal and informal social protection. In every case, the forms of support that will be discussed here can be observed in the participants' narratives. This discussion about routes to integration and inclusion will be discussed in four specific areas: *formal social protection (state sector), the third sector or non-state actors, informal social protection* and *volunteering*. Although TSOs fall within the formal social protection providers, they play a crucial role in

integrating ASRs, and therefore a separate section is dedicated to discussing the third sector's contribution.

7.3.1. Formal social protection: state sector

This section focuses specifically on the state sector and how state-provided formal social protection promotes integration and inclusion, and how it has worked in practice to support my research participants. Within this section, participants' experiences of how statutory service providers facilitated their integration and inclusion will be discussed. During the interviews, participants identified two main themes that contributed to their integration experience in Glasgow: *provision and access to mainstream services* and *extended or compassionate support from staff in the statutory sector*.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the state has been conceived as the primary formal social protection provider and the key player in removing barriers to effective integration (Ager and Strang, 2008). Throughout the interviews, the main thing to be pointed out was the strong desire of the Scottish Government to integrate and include ASRs. As Danso (2002: 4) argues, 'the initial settlement experiences of any immigrant group are very much instrumental in setting the tone for the way the integration process proceeds for the group in the adopted country'. The Scottish approach has created a positive experience for most of the newcomers in Glasgow. In comparison with their experiences in transit countries and in the south of the UK, participants' accounts of their current situation in Glasgow revealed that the degree of provision of formal social protection services and the state and local council's involvement contributed to their expected outcomes of integration.

> I just want to say that everything we get [in Glasgow] is good, like, you can have security, a secured life, especially since we came from countries that they were not secure. But we can feel much safer now. There are many things they gave us here and they take care of us. Really, the people here, they take care of people here and of asylum seekers. I can also say that all the services are good (Dalilah - F, AS, Egypt, 30–35).

A significant difference in the Scottish approach is the inclusion of asylum seekers in the process. In contrast to the UK government's integration policy

that focusses only on refugee integration, the Scottish Government encourages and facilitates asylum seekers' integration in Glasgow. '*We don't have an asylum system policy at all, but as far as we are concerned, integration should start from day one'* (Maya - Connected Communities Division, Scottish Government). The Scottish integration approach ensures asylum seekers have ongoing access to various kinds of formal support (Mulvey, 2015). Maya further said:

> Things like healthcare you can continue to access. Education for children you can continue to access, and often higher and further education, although that does come down to individual institutions.

The Scottish integration approach therefore ensures a better quality of settlement experiences in Glasgow than in other parts of the UK. The Scottish Government's and local council's involvement to ensure a good quality of provision and access to formal social protection services helped them to feel included in their locality by changing their own perceptions of being unwanted or underserving asylum seekers or refugees. Participants referring to their early experiences and word-of-mouth stories from their friends and families in England highlighted that they were forced to believe that they were the least wanted people in England due to the UK government's lack of involvement and hostile immigration policies.

> I was running from the war in my country. I was looking for a safe and secure place to live but was treated badly in London. The government hated people like us. However, when I reached here [Glasgow], I found that lots of rules here support asylum seekers and refugees. I am getting a lot of support from all the government offices. In most of the places, they treated me friendly but I cannot say this for all. There is no complication here like [there was] in London (Alimah - F, R, Sudan, 25–30).

This concern was reflected through asylum-seeking participants' experiences of lower levels of financial support, uninhabitable houses and restrictions of access to other services. It was seen as a key distinction to define deserving and undeserving people within the degrees of unwantedness in the UK immigration policy framework (Mulvey, 2015; Strang and Ager, 2010). Although the Scottish Government or GCC cannot take responsibility for

asylum related issues, their involvement in service provision through sub-national and local policies and actions has encouraged participants to feel included in their society. In turn, for the participants, a different level of approach in Glasgow meant they have been considered as deserving a good quality of life.

In line with that, participants' views were that the levels of provision of mainstream services in Glasgow were foundational to being accepted in society. Significantly, the state's involvement in ensuring opportunities to access formal social protection made them feel as if they were viewed as equal to the locals in Glasgow, though there were considerable differences in service provision for different groups. The levels of support made them feel as if they were being treated and accepted as ordinary individuals and accepted in the community. Once again, pointing to their experience in their countries of origin, participants highlighted that the availability and quality of formal services and the support given to them determined their understanding of inclusion. Participants particularly stated that their ability to access healthcare and education as a significant state contribution to their integration and inclusion in Glasgow. Ager and Strang (2008) highlight healthcare and education as significant indicators of integration because good health involves greater social participation and engagement in societal activities including education and involvement in integration activities. The Scottish Government recognised the needs of ASRs and also destitute asylum seekers and provided them with easy access to healthcare (and yet, there were issues with access, see Chapter 5). Consequently, the formal support contributed to ASRs' feelings of belonging. Samuel (M, AS, Canada, 40–45) who suffered mental health issues, appreciated the provision of mental health services and said:

> Right now, I have plugged in already to a branch; a [mental health] resource centre. So, I see a community psychiatrist nurse there. I see someone every week to two weeks. Then I see a doctor once every few months or so. So, as far as I [can tell], I get the same medical service that I think anyone else in Scotland gets. As an asylum seeker maybe I get even a little better [service] because I am in a vulnerable situation and am considered part of the vulnerable population. Therefore, I maybe

> get a little bit better services than someone typically would get in Scotland.

Further to healthcare services, asylum seekers could access ESOL and non-advanced further education classes only, while refugees had access to full-time education including higher educational qualifications (Mulvey, 2015). Access to, and progress within, the education system served as a significant integration marker, and as a major means towards this goal. Although participants faced challenges in access (discussed in Chapter 5), education created significant opportunities for employment, for wider social connection, and for combining language learning and cultural exchange. Mustafa (M, AS, Iraq, 40–45) shared his experience of attending ESOL classes that made him feel included in Glasgow:

> Since I came here, [ESOL classes] have been a big help. In college, I learned a lot of English. [Previously] I didn't know any English words. So now I can understand people. I can speak to the people on the streets and I can understand many things with limited speaking.

In essence, formal social protection (state provision) to a certain extent shaped participants' perceptions of opportunities, overcoming unwantedness, becoming a part of the Glaswegian community and building a sense of belonging in their new locality. As scholars highlight success in formal aspects is an indication of positive integration outcomes; and because success in these domains is likely to assist the wider integration process (Fyvie et al., 2003; Ager and Strang, 2008). The discussion around formal social protection and integration highlighted several ways in which the state sector played a role in promoting the integration and inclusion of ASRs in Glasgow: firstly, the state's recognition of ASRs as individuals with significant needs for their safety and security; secondly, provision of and access to formal support such as healthcare and education, which are more restricted for asylum seekers in the UK; thirdly, coupling up with the provision of services, the Scottish Government and local authorities' roles in ensuring a good quality service for them in Glasgow.

While participants appreciated the formal social protection, they also highlighted the extended support provided by the staff in the statutory sector. The next section will therefore discuss participants' experiences of informal support provided by formal sector staff and asylum housing provider.

7.3.2. Non-state actors/third sector

TSOs played a crucial role in promoting the integration of ASRs. As Mayblin and James (2019) highlighted, there is a significant demand for TSOs because the state has not been providing adequate support to ASRs. This demand and the state's dependency on the third sector placed TSOs in a gap-filling role (see Chapter 5 for more info about the third sector in social protection provision). As a result, the Scottish Government recognised this prominent role of the third sector and have taken the necessary steps to include them in promoting inclusion and integration. Maya (Connected Communities Division, Scottish Government) stated:

> We are trying to bring them [TSOs] together. It is our policy approach through the New Scots. It is when you have got all these organisations who are wanting to pursue this route and we think it is a benefit to everyone for this route to be pursued … We bring people together to prevent either duplication of effort or missing particular groups or focus. Can we align things so that we get the best value out of the resources that we have?

Findings indicated that organisations such as charities, RCOs, NGOs and faith-based organisations were the primary actors promoting integration and inclusion. On their arrival and during the various stages of their settlement in Glasgow, ASRs faced difficulties such as gathering adequate information about services, following the statutory agency process, navigating the application process, and so on. Access to services was the key indicator of integration and inclusion of ASRs, and hence for many participants, charities and NGOs were the sole sources of support or platform for integration activities. It could be the result of the Scottish Government's approach to integrating newcomers from the first day of their arrival. The Scottish Government invested in and collaborated with organisations, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and TSOs (integration networks, charities, PAiH, SRC, BRC) to provide advice on how ASRs could access support, particularly

legal advice and the like, if necessary. Refugees were therefore directed towards TSOs to facilitate their process of accessing services. This illustrates an effective relationship between TSOs and statutory sectors to promote ASRs' access to mainstream formal social protection services. While the Scottish Government and GCC funded many TSOs, they also coordinated the activities under the initiatives of integration networks in Glasgow.

> I am new in Glasgow. I think it's more like, the communities are more aware of asylum seekers. Here organisations help you more than I could see [happening] in England and more than I noticed in London. There are lots of organisations that support asylum seekers and people who have been detained and things like that, which is really good (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25).

Drop-in groups and activities that TSOs implemented played a key role in integrating ASRs in their new locality. These drop-in activities offered vital support for ASRs regardless of the type of users they were, for example, regular or occasional. Participants indicated that the drop-ins promoted integration and inclusion through the provision of three key aspects: *information, a safe space for meeting and interacting with others,* and *subsistence support.*

Primarily, the weekly drop-in groups and activities acted as places to gather information and orient newcomers about services, resources and support available in Glasgow. Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) stated:

> Information is very important. If you are not informed you will be deformed [laughed]. Sharing information with people and creating awareness is extremely important if you want them [ASRs] to integrate. People won't integrate if they don't have information to help them or we don't get the integration support we want. That is why, as I said, I go to the British Red Cross since information is everywhere in the office.

TSOs provided crucial information to ASRs through various means (Zetter and Pearl, 2000; Piacentini, 2015). ASRs often encountered barriers in terms of their awareness of what provisions and services they could access, and they lacked confidence in knowing essential access information. ASRs viewed formal settings as hard to reach for information due to their formal environment, and thus they preferred a drop-in because of its informal setting

that allowed them to actively participate to gather information. ASRs primarily gathered information about integration services and other support through leaflets and posters that were publicised and shared in the organisations. ASRs also had opportunities to seek information and ask questions during the drop-in activities in which staff and other experienced ASRs played a significant role. Furthermore, charities and NGOs regularly invited service providers from the state and non-state sector to meet and share information with those who attended the activities. For instance, an integration network in Maryhill organised weekly activities involving the Scottish Refugee Integration Service (Scottish Refugee Council) who provided advice and support for newly recognised refugees, and Citizens Advice Outreach who provided advice on housing, immigration and welfare rights. Through these various opportunities, participants reported having obtained valuable information, and thus they depended on the network for crucial information. Various types of information have been shared by TSOs ranging from details about local charities, integration activities and skills needed for their employment prospects.

For example, Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) stated:

> So, when you get involved, you learn about lots of things. In north of Glasgow, they [integration networks] were having their meetings. In the meeting, people [staff from other organisations] come and tell what is going on in the community, what they are doing, what their future plans and what help we can get. So, when you go to the meeting, you will know what you can get in the community, what kind of access you can get from other areas, where you can go.

In another example, Rose (Charity providing advice, guidance and support) illustrated:

> When they are in the community we give them information about, for example, MIN and about all activities going on there. They then drop in and learn about another group and from that group they learn about another group. If you are dispersed in the east of Glasgow we know about this small hub which has got a lot of activities such as a family group for mums, cookery classes and so on.

Julia (NGO – Employment Support) further highlighted:

> When we have clients come in and say I want to be an engineer … [we tell them] if you want to be an engineer, you need to go in to pass the CSCS [Constructions Skills Certification Scheme] test, because it is a health and safety [requirement] that you need to do this. We say you need to go back to [the] Jobcentre and tell your work coach that you need this training, that you need this test, and they need to send you to this training. We tell clients to pass information to work coaches and [the] Jobcentre because at [the] Jobcentre they don't know what to do with people.

A significant benefit of drop-ins was the provision of safe meeting places for interaction. ASRs require safe meeting spaces in order to enhance their access to informal social protection, as they encountered unfriendliness and were thus afraid of making contacts with members in their locality (see Chapter 5). Safe meeting places increased ASRs' opportunity to build rapport and expand their existing network. Therefore, ASRs considered charities and TSOs as places to feel welcomed and it helped them to access informal social protection. Indeed, scholars have illustrated that TSOs play an important role in fostering ASRs' social networks (Zetter, Griffiths and Sigona, 2005; Spicer, 2008). Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35–40) stated**:**

> Sometimes, once I left my house, I kept my head down and walked to the charity because I didn't want to look at others' frowning [at me] or unfriendly faces on the road. Once I entered the charity, the smiling faces of volunteers in there was always like a rainbow.

What Farhad did soon after sharing his narrative reflected how profoundly a welcoming space could create an opportunity for integration. He immediately unlocked his phone and used the internet to find and read a verse from the Bible. Quoting Genesis 9:13–17, he recited: *'13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth … 17 So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth"'.* The conversation I had with Farhad reflected the importance of TSOs in regard to welcoming newcomers to a locality. A positive welcome and expressions of friendliness from the people in the weekly groups and activities encouraged ASRs to consider TSOs as the primary space for positive interaction with others. Sadie (Charity – Household

support) shared her experience of a cooking activity that provided a safe space for interactions:

> I think cooking together could really bring people together. Bread is something everybody knows about. Everybody has some experience of bread. So, we started bread-making as an activity. We noticed that it was really very good at drawing people, people who maybe had no English or who might feel shy about doing something else, and they would come and join. Sometimes, you would say to a volunteer, let us make some bread and they would say there is nobody here. But as soon as you put down a bowl of flour on the table and start making bread, people might be around the table. So something about that draws people in.

Positive interaction with others was a significant indicator of integration and inclusion of ASRs because, as newcomers, arriving in a new place with a lack of information and limited English-second-language skills, they required opportunities and safe places to meet other people to share their daily experiences, and discuss and resolve their problems regarding access to services. Therefore, there was a significant need for safe and secure communal places. To provide such opportunities to integrate, several TSOs implemented specific actions to promote conversation among asylum seekers, refugees and volunteers. For instance, Scottish Action for Refugees' (SAFR) implemented the SAFR space action with the help of volunteers to invite ASRs to gather together and interact with others while having a cup of tea or coffee and a short meal. What was really interesting in such charities was that locals who attended changed their thinking about ASRs in Glasgow. During an informal discussion with a Glaswegian, he said:

> Scottish people reading the Daily Mail may have heard lots of negative things about refugees but actually, when I and others come into this charity, we have been getting to know about people and making friends. This completely changed our perception. You know that I used to tell my friends that I am not feeling comfortable with refugees. So, a friend asked me to come here [to the charity] and now Mohamed [a refugee] is my friend. Now if friends talk negatively about refugees, I would say that is not true, and [tell them about] my friend Mohamed and say this is his experience. I was able to challenge their discomfort with refugees (Field note: 23.07.2018).

Moreover, weekly group activities had been the place for ASRs to find out about access to essential household items to cover their subsistence needs. As discussed in Chapter 5, many asylum seekers were unable to manage the acquisition of household needs with their limited income. They often reported having insufficient household items such as utensils, carpets, and furniture, among other things. Refugees also struggled to manage their daily lives without employment; even though they received financial benefits. Although their circumstances are different, ASRs each needed additional support to fulfil their needs (see, Chapter 6). Support is therefore made available to them for finding the necessary second-hand, or sometimes new, essential goods for their households. Tan (Charity shop) stated:

> We just started from the bottom. So people need clothes, they need food and they need household goods. So I think we are the only organisation in Glasgow which provides that [...] [However] there are organisations who give a one-off donation and there are people who would do pop-up clothes and things. I think we are the only kind of organisation which opens five days a week for people to come in and find what they need for their personal use and for the house.

Sadie (Charity – Household support) shared another example,

> They [ASRs] can access our food cupboard; we offer food for people whether they are refugees or sanctioned by [the] Jobcentre. We try and make that as dignified a process as possible. I think it is really hard and inevitable but we have got something to offer that they need, and even though it is not a fair exchange, we always try. We always say to people you can pick what you want. They can get into the cupboard and they can take whatever they want in that cupboard. Certainly, if they are coming back next week, we always ask, do you want something that is not here and we can try and get it for you next week.

For instance, the furniture project organised by the Castlemilk Community Church every Friday gave ASRs the opportunity to attend the furniture project and collect necessary items such as chairs, tables, cupboards, beds and often electrical equipment (subject to assessment by the staff). As a result, this particular action helped ASRs to obtain necessary items without losing their limited financial support. Being able to furnish their households helped them to create an atmosphere of homeliness in their accommodation. A feeling of

home symbolised living a normal life, like other locals in Glasgow, and contributed to a feeling of being respected in society. It also provided an opportunity to feel secure in their new environment.

> I need furniture; it makes me happy. I feel like I am having a respectable life. I cannot imagine daily life without enough cutlery, food, or even a comfortable chair to sit on. I know it may sound greedy but sitting on a nice chair and eating my lunch or having coffee makes me feel better here. Trust me, it feels good (Gulzar - M, R, Sudan, 30–35).

While the previously presented narratives emphasised ASRs' views about TSOs and the services they provided, a significant finding of this research was that participants established the third sector as their key navigation mechanism to adjust and survive in Glasgow. TSOs have been considered as a mandatory intermediary to access social protection in Glasgow. For instance, refugees approached those organisations to assist them in making applications through online platforms to receive welfare benefits or permanent housing. For example, the SRC's refugee integration service programme assists with accessing benefits, accommodation, and obtaining national insurance numbers, etc. (Scottish Refugee Council, 2019). According to Namazzi (F, AS, Uganda, 30–35):

> I always go to the Scottish Refugee Council for any support. I have never been to Glasgow City Council regarding my housing because they [SRC] did everything for me.

And Jamal (M, R, Syria, 55–60) stated:

> I tried to book an appointment at the GP, but they didn't give me an early appointment. So, I went to the organisation (British Red Cross) and got an early appointment through them.

These examples show several scenarios whereby the third sector provided support to include ASRs. There was an assumption among participants that dealing directly and only with the statutory agencies to access mainstream services might hinder them from receiving timely support. Two significant reasons were identified for this belief: the communication difficulties that come with the language barrier, coupled with participants' experience of waiting for a protracted time to receive the support, and a lack of additional support

offered by the statutory agencies to facilitate ASRs' successful access to services. The majority of the support system has been digitalised and many participants struggled with digital technologies due to a lack of proficiency and access to resources. Additionally, those who face language barriers did not receive any additional support to read or translate letters sent from the mainstream service providers such as the Home Officer or the Jobcentre. Therefore, ASRs took letters to BRC or integration networks or charities for translation. Aliyah (F, AS, Sudan, 20–25) shared her experience as a volunteer at the Unity Centre:

> In Unity, anyone who comes through that door will get any help they want and we would like to help them. Like this woman, I had to print something for her and then print a Google map to show the location of the bank so she just can use it to directly take with her to the bank.

Furthermore, the third sector had been used as a way to cut corners. In comparison with the normal process to access services, participants found it easier, quicker and the cheapest way to overcome the bureaucratic barriers. Similar to what Jamal (M, R, Syria, 55–60) stated above, ASRs approach SRC, BRC or PAiH to navigate the normal procedures. For vulnerable ASRs, who have many struggles completing separate processes to access services, TSOs have expertise in certain areas, for example, Positive Action in Housing often deal with the housing issues of ASRs. Therefore, they could advocate on behalf of their clients to speed up the process or to explain things to mainstream service providers.

For instance, Gulzar (M, R, Sudan, 30–35) said, '[The SRC and the BRC] *know who to call and what to say'.* Moreover, participants' accounts also indicated that those who could manage the bureaucratic process, who were aware of procedures, who received good support from work coaches and had the capacity to manage their tasks, still took advantage of inclusive practices that the third sector offered. Participants' learned experiences of using charities and NGOs to access their services contributed more to their continued use of the third sector. A refugee stated that charities and NGOs act as a broker between them and statutory service providers.

> Honestly, I have not got a direct relationship with the government sector. I have a good relationship with the SRC. Once I go there, SRC will make calls for me. They will call the bank or [the] Jobcentre. They can fast track some stuff (Tenneh - F, R, Sierra Leone, 25–30).

During my fieldwork in Govan, I also observed how refugees made use of resources (computers and staff members) within TSOs to complete their forms, send emails and follow up the progress of their applications. On 10.08.2018, I attended a men's group activity. We were in the computer room. While some of them were watching videos on YouTube, a refugee (John) requested help from the staff (Duncan) to register online. Duncan read the instructions to register online and then asked if John had an email account. John said no. So Duncan first helped him to create an email account. While doing that Duncan told me that most of the beneficiaries of this men's group didn't have an email account when they arrived in Glasgow and so he often helped them to create new ones. He also highlighted this was a common situation among ASRs. Once they created the email account for John, Duncan helped him to register online. He was explaining each and every step to John because he didn't understand the process. They took more than an hour to complete the registration. During this hour, ASRs' barriers to using a computerised system were visible.

In another instance, Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) stated that he approached an integration network's staff member to complete the online application form because he did not want to make any mistakes, which he considered might hinder him gaining access to services. He said: *'they can help me with my form to complete. That does not mean I cannot complete it but because I have not done it before, I don't want to start messing with it'.* It was a clear indication of how ASRs have been using the third sector resources to increase their opportunities to access services.

Moreover, the third sector was facilitating ASRs' integration and inclusion by preparing them to cope with demands for soft skills in their daily life. Soft skills mainly focused on language and adapting to technology-based systems. Interviews with participants highlighted that some of them struggled to cope with the enhanced online systems while some others lacked skills such as

operating a computer, using the internet and English language skills. As a result, several charities and NGOs were offering ASRs practical support designed to improve their skills by including them in activities such as computer classes, teaching them how to create an email account, providing language classes, and other forms of help. Further to improving ASRs' soft skills, NGOs were also facilitating refugees' access to mainstream society by preparing them for their employment prospects.

> We do employability. We help people to find direction because the main problem people come into … [if they are] from overseas is sometimes overestimating their ability to do something. We give them a kind of reality check, but we are very good with people. We have helped them to identify what kind of skills they have, what they want to do, what kind of background they have and some of them definitely need to improve their English to do professional courses and so we organise placements. We run employability sessions. We have life skills courses. We used to run women's empowerment courses. It was very successful … because women coming from let's say Sudan are different. It is a culture shock for people … I'm not saying that we change their minds, or we break their mentality, but we help people to adapt a new society (Julia – NGO – Employment Support).

Another significant finding of this study was that TSOs as formal social protection providers promoted integration and inclusion by forging a relationship with ASRs built upon trust. On their arrival, ASRs faced direct and indirect barriers due to the controlled bureaucratic system, which was perceived negatively by ASRs. As a result, participants harboured distrust against the statutory service providers, specifically the Home Office, GCC and the Jobcentre. Consequently, participants hesitated to approach the statutory organisations and avoided raising questions. However, the welcoming attitude associated with TSOs made participants feel particularly comfortable, and as such, they saw charities and NGOs and their staff as those who could be trusted and would be willing and able to assist them to access the welfare provisions in Glasgow. Thus, ASRs often tried to access the statutory services with the help of TSOs such as SRC, BRC, PAiH and other integration networks.

> When I first came to Glasgow, I didn't have any contacts. I didn't know which lawyers to trust. I didn't know where to go. I went to the Scottish Refugee Council and they were the ones aiding me. […] and you feel more comfortable with such kind of organisations. […] So, I went to the Scottish Refugee Council. You feel like they are like humans. You don't feel like they will judge you and put you in a place that makes things worse (Aliyah - F, AS, Sudan, 20–25).

In summary, this section discussed the roles of TSOs in facilitating and promoting integration and inclusion of ASRs in Glasgow. Arguably, the third sector shaped ASRs' integration and inclusion, as ASRs used the third sector to navigate through the system. This strategy was mainly shaped by their assumption that formal social protection services can be easily accessed and received if TSOs get involved; hence participants often used these organisations even if they were able to manage certain tasks.

7.3.3. Informal social protection

While formal social protection facilitated ASRs' integration in various ways, participants also used informal social protection to increase their chances of integration and inclusion. Findings identified two significant roles of informal social protection: firstly, *forming informal networks and connections* and secondly, *contributing to the access of formal social protection*.

Building social networks is vital for ASRs in their society as such informal social protection facilitated the integration and inclusion of ASRs by forming networks with others in their locality (Poros, 2011; Cheung and Phillimore, 2013). Participants formed social networks and ties through ethnic networks and cross-ethnic networks, including ties with locals (Glaswegians and others). Nathan (DWP) emphasised:

> What is important is also for people to have friends, to have a social network and that is important because that helps your mental health, which means you are able to get involved in society and integrate yourself.

Social networks could be dynamic and might change over time, but most of the participants had strong ethnic-based networks in Glasgow. Bokamoso (Male, AS, Namibia, 30–35) stated:

> When you come here, you meet up with other guys from Namibia in the accommodation and when you come to sign in Serco. You could always find someone from your own community.

This transnational connection with a shared sense of identity with others was reported as having led to building the strongest ties among particular groups of participants. Ager and Strang (2004) introduced these types of networks as social bonds in their discussion of indicators of integration. Bilecen (2019) highlights that ethnicity plays a crucial role in access to valuable resources. In particular, social inclusion arising from the formation of connections with others from their countries of origin promoted integration by building up a sense of security and safety in Glasgow. As Fabunni (Male, AS, Namibia, 30–35) stated:

> There is a Namibian community and we have a good relationship. Even most of my friends here in Glasgow are Namibians. It is good to have friendship with others from my country because we can talk freely and share things casually. If I have other [non-Namibians as friends], then there might be language problem and cultural issues. Not all of us are same, you know.

While the above indicated mostly physical informal networks, participants shared examples of virtual networking in their ethnic networks. Nowadays, virtual networking on the internet is a well-known platform, for example, consider Facebook and WhatsApp communities. Mobile communication, internet and social media increased ASRs' access to interpersonal and social networks. For example, the Facebook account of the Syrian Community in Glasgow[12] shares information about available resources and relevant events and activities on their page. Additionally, transnational identities are manifested and maintained through such social networking sites. In their study about Latvian migrants, Bucholtz and Sūna (2019) highlight that while migrants maintain connections with fellow nationals to remain in the socio-cultural space of their homeland, there are also actual benefits such as exchanging information. Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) stated:

[12] https://www.facebook.com/pg/syrian.network.glasgow/community/

> Facebook and WhatsApp, they are amazing you know. I am a person who actively searches for opportunities to build networks. So, on Facebook, I found people from my country. I talked to them; we shared a lot and then we also video-called through WhatsApp. It is amazing, you know, because we don't need to meet in person. If you need anything, just put a message on Facebook or WhatsApp and you will get a lot of information.

Findings suggested that participants built either physical or virtual forms of social ethnic networks to exchange practical and emotional support. Fatima (F, R, Syria, 45–50) stated: *'my Syrian community helped since my arrival as an asylum seeker to Glasgow. They always advised me where to go and what to do'.* This illustrated the significance of networks in providing practical support. As Ryan (2011) states, social networks can directly affect migrants' ability to access services. Additionally, for some participants, a strong inter-ethnic network provided emotional support. Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) stated:

> Upon my arrival, I was in a bad [state], especially I felt bad emotionally because I don't know anyone here. You struggle a lot but after some weeks, I met another lady in a charity and we became friends. From there, we shared our problems, we talked in our language and sometimes I would cry or she cried but we felt better after that. You know, it is a kind of friendship that you can have only with someone from your country.

For Aleea, building a network with another person from Iraq helped to overcome her emotional struggles. It cannot be denied that ASRs require emotional support due to their precarious migration journey and their deprived situation in Glasgow. Strang and Quinn (2019) suggest refugees develop a close relationship with people from the same country to give and receive emotional support.

Although most of the participants emphasised ethnic-based social networks, some of them established ties in cross-ethnic networks with ASRs from different backgrounds, and with locals to adapt to their new locality. Babar (Male, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) stated:

> Glasgow is a big city. We are living with lots of people. In my area, there is a big Pakistani community and we have some African and Arabian communities. We recently had some Chinese and Sri Lankans too. I don't want to mingle only with

> Pakistanis and Arabians because of my religion. So, to live peacefully in my area, it is important for me to get involved with other people.

Scholars highlight that ASRs' initial friend networks are usually with other ASRs (Kearns and Whitley, 2015; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). Participants expressed feelings of safety arising from bonding with others in their locality, especially with fellow ASRs who had similar experiences and characteristics, such as speaking a common language (Arabic), a region (the Middle East or North Africa), the same religion, food habits, and so on. Meanwhile, cross-ethnic connections were also made with people of different backgrounds, uniting diverse people and groups in Glasgow. This included forging ties with other asylum seekers, refugees and community members in their new locality. Adiel (M, AS, Namibia, 35–40) referring to his friendship with Glaswegians stated:

> As I said, we have a good relationship with each other. We share everything. We are like brothers and sisters to each other. Maybe we have not come to the situation saying no, no, no, we are Africans or we are Asians. We are happy at the moment because the Scottish people are looking after us equally.

Although participants highlighted the importance of inter-ethnic networks, the vast majority of them were interacting with ASRs from various backgrounds before meeting fellow nationals. It emerged that there were opportunities to meet other ASRs rather than nationals in the asylum accommodation or other places. For instance, Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) stated:

> … when you come into this country they will give you a house, somewhere to stay. It's like, they throw you in the hotel … If you are lucky you meet another guy, flatmate or maybe someone from the language classes who is going to help you out.

The cross-ethnic networks were often the first contacts to be found because participants spent more time with them, lived in the same locality and sometimes shared a house, regardless of their nationality. A strong presence of integration networks and charities that involved ASRs and locals further provided ample opportunities to build more cross-ethnic informal networks. These social networks were established through various kinds of informal

connections, such as friendship groups, gardening volunteers, and formalised local networks (for example, RCOs). For the most part, social networks were based on available opportunities to meet others. Danso further stated:

> They [local volunteers –often Glaswegians] helped me out. When you chat with them, they take you home for dinner, they ask you questions like what you want to do. ... After a week, they will be like, you know what, we have this information ... and then they start to explain things.

ASRs built cross-ethnic networks to gain valuable information and improve their chances of navigating through the system and accessing services, though there were visible differences in terms of language, ethnicity and religion. Upon their arrival, they had limited knowledge and information about their locality and available services, and also a lack of inter-ethnic networks; thus, they depended on others for their daily survival. Abdo (M, AS, Sudan, 30–35) highlighted his experiences as follows:

> I didn't know a lot of things but I tried to learn from other peoples' experiences. The people who came here [before me] have experienced [the system]. So, I asked them and they just told me about their experiences. So, we just knew about things from other people.

Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) stated:

> … I have friends from other communities, Africans and Arabic. So, when I meet with them I learn about the other community. It is not for the religion, it is for the culture because when you meet with them, you learn how they live, how they live their lives, their languages and their countries. It is a nice conversation, so then maybe you have a good connection.

Those who managed to forge social ties with locals reported receiving support to socially progress. For example, Danso talked about how Glaswegians helped him to find his current stable job as a bus driver in Glasgow. ASRs' ability to find jobs or gain access to other mainstream services have been shaped by their social networks (Ryan, 2011). Establishing social bridges with people from other backgrounds therefore created a two-way interaction between various groups, which in turn promoted integration. Cross-ethnic networks supported social inclusion through increased social and cultural

understanding and exchange. It also increased participants' formal social protection opportunities (for example, economic and educational).

Two significant contributions of informal social protection emerged as a means to integrate and include people in their new locality: *access to information* and *support to complete the process to access formal social protection*. Despite the varied backgrounds of participants, those who had a good informal network reported receiving information about available services and were better aware of the support system in Glasgow. For instance, many participants got to know about TSOs through their social networks. If they had not developed a good relationship with others, they would not have been able to find out about the charities and NGOs that support ASRs. Bokamoso (M, AS, Namibia, 30–35) stated:

> When you come here you meet up with other guys from Namibia in the accommodation and when you come to sign in Serco, and they told me more about those places to go to get services. Let's say if you want to collect food, they will tell you where to go and what to do.

Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) stated:

> My friend told me about food banks and social events. I went there to collect free food and also enjoyed some events organised by Refuweegee and Govan Community Project.

A final example, Samuel (M, AS Canada, 40–45) stated:

> About food banks and stuff, I got to know through other asylum seekers. So, some other people that I spent time with at the hostels and hotels – I would run into them in and they would say, there is a food bank that goes on here, this is a really good one. They pointed me in those directions.

Access to information was not the only reason for ASRs to approach informal social protection elements. Most of them approached their friends, families and others to get support to complete the bureaucratic process associated with access to services. In particular, participants required more support from social networks once they received their refugee status because of a lack of help from statutory agencies. In their study about the transition and integration experiences of refugees in Glasgow, Strang, Baillot and Mignard (2017)

highlight that asylum seekers might face more obstacles once they are recognised as refugees because they must take control of applying for services. For instance, during the asylum process participants did not have to apply for any support such as housing, weekly financial benefit and healthcare. These services were provided without any separate application or by visiting any agencies. However, once they received their refugee status, they had to do everything on their own, for example, apply for housing at the GCC/housing association, complete the online application forms, visit state authorities, and so forth. As a result, they could not suddenly take over the responsibilities of applying for benefits on their own and they required additional support. Danso (M, R, Congo, 35–40) stated:

> They ask you to go and search for jobs online. Some people don't know about the computer. Not everyone is educated. So, that is the worse struggle and starts stress. So, stress from being an asylum seeker is still following into refugee stage.

Akifa (F, R, Sudan, 25–30) stated:

> [I was told] to register online [for ESOL classes] and I don't know how to register online. I asked people in the community church where I attend my English class. I asked the members of the community class to help me register online. I faced difficulties to register online.

Like Danso and Akifa, most of the participants struggled to adapt to a new system. Participants felt disempowered, because even if they managed to operate a computer, it was hard for them to complete an online application form due to their lack of knowledge and computer skills. Their difficulties with English created more barriers to using a computerised system. Refugees therefore required additional help to successfully complete their application process for mainstream services. Although Phillimore (2012) claimed that new refugees are not in a strong position to use their social networks' support to access services, findings indicated that social bonds and bridges significantly contributed to the integration process by facilitating participants' access to resources. Informal social protection as social capital enabled people not only to exchange and access resources but also to provide emotional support (Putnam, 2000).

In the meantime, findings also indicate a limited yet important informal role the staff from formal service providers played in facilitating ASRs' integration in Glasgow. Participants, as newcomers, expected additional support to overcome challenges in their access to formal and informal support. However, staff in the formal sector and asylum housing provider were often criticised for their lack of support to ASRs. Staff did not typically engage in any activities outside their general roles and responsibilities because they are not paid to provide extended assistance to ASRs. Thus, the lack of support from staff created negative perspectives of services providers which appeared to be a hostile environment. Despite general negative views of formal social protection providers, several participants said that the staff from the statutory services played an informal role in helping ASRs.

Primarily, participants mostly criticised staff from asylum housing providers for their inadequate support and hostile behaviour. In particular, Takudzwa (M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45) described Serco housing officers as *'ex-soldiers with no heart'*, appearing as a hostile behaviour. However, several participants pointed out examples of how staff from Serco helped them to integrate into their new society. Adiel (M, AS, Namibia, 35–40) stated:

> Serco [housing officer] provided me with a list of places where you could volunteer. From that list, I managed to find some organisations. I called them and visited there. I started doing community projects [such as community garden]. I also met a few guys there and we are in the same group.

After dispersal, the vast majority of the participants were left to struggle without adequate information about the new location. In this instance, the housing officer's gesture involving sharing insights about the new environment, which greatly supported newcomers who had a lack of knowledge and were unfamiliar with the locality. Housing officers also helped participants to learn more about their locality by finding them places to get involved. Adiel explained how his asylum housing officer helped him to learn about his new locality: *'he went beyond his defined duties and responsibilities to help'* in that the housing officer took Adiel around the locality *'to show locations of shops, charities, religious places and places of entertainment'*. Participants managed to learn more about places to buy cheaper food,

kitchen utensils, sanitary products and other essential household items with the housing officer's support. The housing officer helped them to locate social spaces to build their informal networks and socialise with fellow ASRs in the community, which was an important aspect of integrating and feeling included.

Although I described Aleea's (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) case in Chapter 5, it was such a significant example that her experience deserves reiteration in this section. When she did not have any additional clothes to wear and did not have anyone to ask for help, she approached her housing officer and he helped her to find clothes. She said, when I asked, *'he didn't say no or asked me to go away; instead, he helped me'* and further emphasised that '*this was not something they normally do in Serco'*. Although this incident sounds simple, the action of the housing officer itself reflected welcoming asylum seekers and helping them to address their needs. Ambrosini (2016) suggests employees who are aware of their inability to provide certain social service would often refer to private services. Therefore, despite the negative views about Serco, a few Serco housing officers were praised for the effort they made to facilitate the inclusion and integration of newly arrived asylum seekers in their new localities.

Furthermore, several participants highlighted the positive role of compassionate healthcare workers. Abeo (M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45) shared his experience of how a nurse at a dental practice helped him to obtain HC2 to help with healthcare costs. Asylum seekers, as low-income earners, were eligible to access this financial support. However, the vast majority of asylum seekers were not aware of it. Similarly, Abeo did not know about his eligibility to obtain HC2, which could help him with the medical costs (including dental) but the staff at the dental practice shared information about his entitlement for the HC2 certificate. Consequently, he applied for this certificate and managed to receive cost-free health support.

During fieldwork, many ASRs expressed their wish to support workers to be friendly and exhibit a supporting attitude. Seemingly small but compassionate actions such as sharing information, taking ASRs around the locality to

orientate them, and helping them to obtain or access available support provided opportunities for participants to feel included.

7.3.4. Volunteering and integration

During this research, volunteering was identified as a key contributor to ASRs' integration and inclusion. While it was often provided by formal social protection providers such as charities, NGOs and faith-based organisations, volunteering also facilitated informal social protection. Volunteering promoted integration and inclusion by providing ASRs with opportunities to do something meaningful, meet others and build ethnic and cross-ethnic networks, get involved in their local community, gain financial benefits, fulfil subsistence needs, build their confidence, gain working experience, improve their language skills and gain access to information.

> Amazing! Opportunities everywhere. So the first thing for integration is volunteering. We have Volunteer Glasgow; it is an amazing office. They always organize events, and SRC they also organize events every month for volunteering opportunities. So again, it is up to people but if you want to volunteer, you can volunteer everywhere. Yes, you might not be a volunteer in a Scottish power company but charity shops, libraries, schools, and organisations like us. We help people to get experience. So it's amazing (Sara – Member, Integration network).

In Chapter 6, participants, especially asylum seekers, complained about having no opportunities to engage in meaningful activities due to the associated restrictions on their capacity to work. Even though many participants considered employment as the most significant meaningful activity, several participants started volunteering as a way to do something beneficial, not remain cooped up at home all day long.

> I volunteer every day. I cannot sit home and do nothing. I cannot sleep all day. So, I volunteer. I go to the church and I work as a barber for homeless people once a week. I have experience. I went to the Red Cross to look for more volunteering (Mustafa – M, AS, Iraq, 40–45).

Participants who volunteered in TSOs reported having increased opportunities to meet others and get involved in their local community. As highlighted

earlier, social networks played a significant role in facilitating integration and inclusion. Volunteering often included participating in integration activities, community-based events, drop-ins and other activities. These activities were normally attended only by ASRs but on occasion, local community members also participated in drop-ins and other activities. In turn, participants had opportunities to meet fellow nationals and people from cross-ethnic communities. Julia (NGO – Employment Support) shared her experience of how volunteering provided ASRs with opportunities to meet and interact, which reduced tensions among locals:

> I remember when I had just started [working], there was kind of prejudice against migrants, against asylum seekers but nowadays it is better because I think after the Commonwealth Games [in 2014], after all those commitments of volunteers and people, they could see not only white faces, they could see diversity – people from ethnic minorities from different backgrounds volunteering. So I think all these events like sports events has helped local people to know this is kind of okay (Julia – NGO – Employment Support).

For instance, Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35-40) met several other ASRs and was able to build rapport with them while she volunteered in Maslows (a charity in Govan, Glasgow). She did not have any ethnic-based social networks because of a lack of opportunity to meet people in her asylum accommodation. However, volunteering increased her chances of forming social networks in Glasgow. Aleea stated:

> I am volunteering five days a week in three places. So, I am coming out of my house at 8:30 am in the morning and I volunteer until 5:00 pm. When I enter the charity, I start seeing people. Sometimes we don't know languages but I try. When I tried to help they are happy. So, in the end, we become friends. If they want anything, they come again and look for me. A woman I met asked me to come to her house to celebrate her daughter's birthday. See, this is what happens if you volunteer. You meet people, you build friendships and look after each other.

Volunteering also increased one's chances of meeting members of their local community, because locals' involvement in charities, faith-based organisations and NGOs provided a platform to meet and interact with ASRs.

Local members volunteered in TSOs alongside ASRs and they made use of available third sector resources to cater for their daily needs. For example, both locals and ASRs frequently visited certain venues in Glasgow, such as the charity shop in Maslows, Bridging the Gap for community meals and Castlemilk Community Church for the furniture project. According to several participants, these two groups of people exchanged personal opinions, information and shared their experiences over a cup of tea or coffee. This inter-group interaction particularly helped ASRs to understand locals' opinions of migrants and vice versa; sharing these stories helped them to understand each other and fostered a positive connection. Strang and Baillot (2016) suggest volunteering is a vital element to promote social connections that create opportunities to develop intimate and reciprocal friendships.

During the data collection process, I participated as a kitchen volunteer in a charity. Every Thursday, a number of volunteers including asylum seekers, refugees and locals, grouped together to prepare meals for a community meal, a weekly lunch that was free for anyone. One day, while I was cutting onions for the meal, a volunteer (elderly Glaswegian) approached me and introduced himself and asked me about myself. When I told him that I was researching ASRs in Glasgow, he immediately started sharing his experience of how he had ended up becoming a volunteer to help vulnerable migrants. He said that he had initially held negative opinions about ASRs in Glasgow and didn't like them. However, one day, a friend invited him to attend this community meal event. On that day, he had had the opportunity to talk to several ASRs, although only those who could communicate using limited English. Despite the language barrier, short conversations he had with ASRs about their experiences back in their countries of origin, migration journeys and daily struggles to survival in Glasgow had changed his negative opinions about them. Since then, he has shared his now positive opinions about migrants with his family, friends and others in his community. This particular conversation with him illustrated how conversations between local and newcomers can create positive relationships (Field note: 12.07.2018).

***Photo 2**: Kitchen volunteering (Source – Bridging the Gap)*

Participants' active engagement assisted them to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem in their new locality. Many participants shared thoughts of being afraid to get involved in the community because of uncertainties and the associated problems of being an asylum seeker or a refugee, such as racism, prejudice and negative stereotypes. Consequently, they lacked confidence and were reluctant to step forward and engage in local-based activities. However, volunteering helped them to cope with their daily lives while living in limbo and with uncertainty. Firstly, the opportunities to volunteer with locals increased their feelings of being accepted as part of the community. Secondly, it also helped them to overcome negative thoughts of not having paid employment and spending unproductive time at home. Thirdly, several organisations had given roles and responsibilities to each and every volunteer regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, religion, immigration status, gender, literacy, language skills, and so on. Being required to take part in specific roles and responsibilities as a volunteer, and being able to contribute to the smooth functioning of organisational activities boosted their self-confidence and self-esteem.

> We [the charity] try and be as volunteer led [includes both locals and ASRs] as we can. So with a volunteer team meeting in the morning, volunteers have to decide what are the activities to do. As a volunteer, you decide what we are going to eat for lunch. We try and have the volunteers provide welcome to people who are coming and we, as members, are there to support

> volunteers rather than saying let's do this, this is how you guys work, or this is how you are going to do it (Sadie – Charity – Household support).

Participants' active volunteering actually increased non-volunteering ASRs' confidence to approach TSOs for support. Having people with asylum or refugee backgrounds created a positive perception among ASRs that volunteers with a similar background to them could understand their problems; thus, they could help to address them. Those who could speak languages such as Arabic, Farsi and Urdu helped TSOs to encourage ASRs to access services without hesitation. Participants reported several instances where people in need hesitated to approach NGOs due to language barriers. Furthermore, having ASRs as volunteers increased the third sector's ability to disseminate information about available services to others and encourage them to make use of it. This was particularly linked with the fact that many participants depended on their social networks to gather information about available services and resources. Aleea (F, AS, Iraq, 35–40) stated:

> When I came to this organisation [a charity in Govan] I was so hesitant and scared to ask for help because all of the people [volunteers] there were white. I am not saying it in a racist way but, you know, it would be nice to meet someone from your country or region. On that day, I didn't see a single person from an Arabian country. We can recognise people from our countries. So, it was difficult for me to ask for anything. Now there are many non-white people here and I am also volunteering here. So, anyone who comes to our charity, they might find someone from their region or countries. It is a nice thing, you know.

In another example, Tan (Charity shop) stated:

> Sometimes it is difficult for [ASRs] to obtain service due to language issues. We usually get around that by having volunteers who speak different languages and that is fantastic and helps us a lot. If we don't have that consistently, that is very difficult.

Most importantly, volunteering provided opportunities for ASRs to learn job-related skills and advance their career prospects. Asylum seekers and refugees are actively engaging in volunteering, but the former cannot engage in formal employment and the latter struggled to find a job even with the right

to work. A main challenge for many participants was that not all of them were qualified for highly skilled jobs such as teaching or managerial positions. For instance, only one-third of the participants had completed higher education and gained qualifications such as undergraduate and postgraduate studies. There was also a lack of interest among many participants in attending colleges and universities for further and higher education in Glasgow. Their primary motivation was to find employment as soon as they received their refugee status so that they could start looking after their families.

Therefore, to overcome the skills gap, there was a dire need to learn practice-based skills which could help them to get a job. In this case, volunteering came in handy for those who wished to develop skills in areas such as hospitality (cooking), administrative work and planning, and assisting in community-based activities. The Scottish integration strategy highlights that volunteering could provide opportunities to develop and use skills (Scottish Government, 2018). For example, Sadie (Charity – Household support) was excited to share how her organisation's bakery project helped two of their volunteers find employment in restaurants.

> We got shared use of a kitchen at the bottom of a high-rise building. That is why we are called High Rise Bakers. About half of the people who came here were from a refugee background and half of the others were local people. That offered a good opportunity to develop maybe professional skills for people who were not going to manage to get back into paid jobs, and to build some confidence. I think what was noticeable to me was that people from a refugee background often may not be given much of a chance in the job market in the UK. However, two of the refugee volunteers had gone out and become bakers in Glasgow.

This example showed that many ASRs were not just passive recipients of services provided by the third sector. Their engagement in volunteering often facilitated them contributing to community mobilisation. In this bakery project, volunteers worked toward producing an affordable bakery product (bread) for their community. By working with locals, they demonstrated their interest in getting involved in activities that benefit the community.

***Photo 3**: Volunteering – Bakery project (Source: Bridging the Gap)*

ASRs, as volunteers, also advocated for the humane treatment of asylum seekers in Glasgow. Though none of the volunteering participants mentioned this advantage of volunteer work, I noticed their advocacy work on several occasions. For instance, during data collection, there was noticeable tension between the asylum housing provider, TSOs and asylum seekers in Glasgow. It was the period when volunteers actively protested against the asylum accommodation eviction and lock changes for those who were refused by the Home Office. For example, after attending the protest on 31 July 2018 against Serco's attempt to evict failed asylum seekers in Glasgow, Samuel (Male, AS, Canada, 40–45) stated: *'Serco tried to mass evict asylum seekers but because of the protests and stuff we did, it took a U-turn and now they have been to court* [with] *regard to it. We have a right to stay'.* Therefore, participants' being volunteers and engaging with both local and others helped them to speak out and advocate for ASRs.

A significant benefit of volunteering was the financial benefits and other support offered to volunteers. As discussed in Chapter 5, many asylum seekers engaged in volunteering activities to receive volunteer allowance from the organisations involved.

In the course of this research, it emerged that ASRs' volunteering role was beneficial for formal social protection providers. According to my observation, they were involved in organisational and policy-level actions. Their

contribution to these two areas showed the interaction between ASRs and social protection as being multifaceted. Firstly, most TSOs involved volunteer ASRs to design, implement, make decisions, promote, and increase the participation of others. For instance, a charity in Gorbals allowed volunteers to decide what activities to do for Big Thursdays and encouraged them to implement it with the help of others. Involving ASRs as volunteers increased opportunities to involve others in service provision. During the data collection, it was observed that ASRs did not hesitate to participate in activities when it was facilitated by a volunteer from a similar background. Furthermore, charities and NGOs used volunteers to promote their organisations and activities. They were often the face of charities in the community or the promotion events. For example, Aliyah (F, AS, Sudan, 20–25) stated:

> There is no such thing like a boss here in our charity. We have volunteers and something called like collective members. There are people who have been working in our charity constantly. Everything is discussed together and we vote. If someone votes against something, then the thing does not proceed. So we as volunteers decide what to do and what not to do.

Secondly, the Scottish Government's approach of integration from day one is aimed at giving ASRs a voice in policy development. As members of the wider ASRs population, volunteers had several opportunities to participate in policy-making. Generally, TSOs are the gatekeepers and access points to reach out to ASRs in Glasgow, and hence volunteers in those organisations were the first set of people to be asked for input. For example, the Framework for Dialogue and the Refugee Policy Forum involved ASRs in informing and shaping the local service provision. In particular, according to Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35) the North East Glasgow Framework for Dialogue offered ASRs opportunities to identify issues affecting them and highlight those issues to organisations, share information, signpost issues to support services and offer mutual support. Holly (COSLA) stated:

> In the course of the first [New Scots integration] strategy, there were various consultation points where people were talking to [ASRs] about different things, for example, the refugee women's group and a couple of other refugee groups represented around the table. With the second strategy, we had something like 2500 responses and of that 700 were [ASRs]; for us, that was really a

> positive effect, like it was a very informed piece of work. One of the commitments we made is to be making sure that the refugees' voices are heard throughout the life of the strategy.

Although these groups provided opportunities for ASRs and relevant stakeholders to engage and actively share opinions and information, ASRs' level of engagement was reported to be low. This was due to ASRs expectations from TSOs. Participants often wished to talk about their individual cases and find solutions to their daily problems rather than contributing to collective action. Babar (M, AS, Pakistan, 30–35), reflecting on his experience as a member of the North East Glasgow Framework for Dialogue, stated that initially many ASRs got involved as they thought it would help their own asylum cases but they became disillusioned upon realising that this was not the case.

Finally, volunteering contributed to maintaining participants' wellbeing. For some, volunteering became a meaningful activity that had given them a sense of purpose in their day-to-day life in Glasgow. Asylum seekers were not allowed to work; hence, many did not have regular, meaningful activities to perform on a daily basis. Volunteering further provided opportunities to engage in community-based activities, which helped them to interact with locals and also develop or improve certain skills. Volunteering also increased participants' opportunities to connect with others. Social networks with fellow nationals, other ASRs, and locals in an unknown locality had a positive impact on participants' mental health. Several participants stated that volunteering had helped them to overcome feelings of frustration and anxiety stemming from living in a state of limbo and associated uncertainties.

> I now have a lot of contacts with people, you know, from all the voluntary work that I do, like the choir and just going places. I also volunteer at an organisation so when we do events, I meet a lot of people and we also go out to the community; we help the community (Takudzwa – M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45).

Although volunteering facilitated the integration and inclusion of ASRs through various forms, there was a significant question that remained about their participation in volunteering. Several organisations reported being open to anyone interested in volunteering. However, interviews with participants

revealed that ASRs' engagement in volunteering was hindered for several reasons. Although TSOs were happy to include ASRs as volunteers, there were limited opportunities. Charities and NGOs with a lack of funding would be unable to recruit more volunteers. Furthermore, the majority of the organisations were small and could not afford to have more than a few volunteers. Most of the volunteers struggled with the English language and so they required support from organisational staff. Additionally, employing more volunteers meant that there would be more time spent managing them, which significantly affected the effective service delivery. TSOs' financial situations restricted the numbers of volunteers they could employ. As discussed, several participants became volunteers to get financial benefits. Maria (Charity – Education and training support) stated:

> We would like to have more volunteers but it is hard. The reality is there is not much money in charities. We need money to run our organisations. Even if it is run by volunteers, we still need money. We cannot get hold of volunteers if we cannot afford to compensate at least their bus pass.

Participants' views of engaging in meaningful activities and expectations of finding a stable job explained their lack of interest in becoming volunteers. Volunteering was not considered to be a meaningful activity because it was not full-time employment with good pay; rather, it was voluntary and provided them with only a small additional allowance, hence the lack of interest in volunteering activities. Additionally, practical challenges ASRs faced hindered engagement in volunteering. For instance, many TSOs were situated in locations away from participants' accommodation. Those who wished to volunteer had to use public transport or walk to the organisations' premises. However, not many ASRs were motivated or enthusiastic enough to walk or take public transport to participate in volunteering. Consequently, these aspects hindered ASRs from engaging in volunteering. When asked about volunteering Adiel (Male, AS, Namibia, 35–40):

> What is the point of volunteering? Is that full-time work? No. Are they going to pay enough money? No. I don't see any benefit in it. I think it is just a waste of time. Others may have a different opinion, but this is mine.

Within this section, the role of volunteering in facilitating the integration and inclusion of ASRs in Glasgow has been discussed. Overall, volunteering has created a sense of meaningful activity, provided opportunities to escape isolation, allowed for contribution to organisations and community, and helped ASRs develops their skills (see for example, Hunt, 2008, Tomlinson, 2008, Yap, Byrne and Davidson, 2010, Mulvey, 2013). In particular, ASRs' everyday negative feeling of living in a hostile environment had been shaped by volunteering opportunities that offered them opportunities to do something meaningful rather than staying home and sleeping. In other words, volunteering made them feel positive because they felt better after helping other vulnerable ASRs in their community.

Simultaneously, a significant finding was that participants who volunteered gained access to financial benefits in the volunteering allowance that slightly improved their purchasing power. All these benefits have facilitated participants' integration, firstly, in terms of enabling them to gain access to structural integration through gaining information, employment prospects (skills development), slightly increased financial capacity and ability to complete the bureaucratic process; secondly, it has promoted their psychosocial wellbeing and increased their chances of social relations, identified as significant for integration; finally, the ability to subsidise their dire needs for additional subsistence.

7.4. Barriers to integration and inclusion

While there were several opportunities, there were also barriers to ASRs' integration and inclusion. The findings indicated three key barriers: firstly, ASRs' interests, motivations and expectations, secondly, lack of preparedness, and, thirdly, dilemmas around their social networks. To begin, as scholars indicate that the degree of integration and inclusion also depends on the individual's level and desire for engagement (Esses, Hamilton and Gaucher, 2017). Formal social protection elements provided several opportunities for ASRs to establish informal social protection through interaction and engagement with others. During my time in the field, I often noticed that those who participated in these activities often focused on having

meals, registering their names for food banks, collecting the food items and then they would leave. They spent less or sometimes no time interacting with others while attending the drop-ins. It is unsurprising that they focused more on receiving material benefits, considering their dire need to survive in Glasgow – a predicament created by a lack of formal support. Consequently, opportunities to interact and integrate were overlooked.

I attended several drop-in days for dry rations and hot meals provided by an integration network. Normally, ASRs could have lunch and then collect their dry rations. During those days, I noticed that a particular group of people come, sit, eat and leave together. Although they might have faced a language barrier when trying to communicate with others, none of the group members attempted to interact with others. Once they had finished their meal and collected the food ration, they left the organisation immediately. Several other sub-groups did the same as them (Field note: 29.07.2018).

My fieldwork observations resonated with the recollections of the charity workers who observed:

> It depends on each person; sometimes advice, information or interactions is not something that people will find useful. Sometimes people don't see advice as something useful to them. So, they will find the place that will give them bread, money or something else (Rose – Charity providing advice, guidance and support).

The second barrier to ASRs' integration and inclusion was the lack of preparedness. Although it might not be technically impossible due to the current decision-making process, asylum seekers need preparation so that they have information about how to access services and seek support once they have received a decision on the outcome of their application. On several occasions, participants expressed anticipation at the thought of building a new life for themselves in Glasgow; the system should prepare them to move forward in their lives. However, participants often remained in their accommodation with no opportunities to engage in meaningful activities outside the home (namely, employment), and had limited engagement with formal social protection services, and a general lack of interaction with others within their locality.

Furthermore, ASRs were often left to look for and establish social connections and informal networks. Informal social protection was significant in preparing newcomers to cope with their new environment. It would not be feasible to regulate or implement policy-level approaches to bring people together; however, participants mostly failed to create social connections with others due to limited opportunities and other logistical barriers. Consequently, many participants did not have a good understanding of how to proceed, how to access services, what kind of support they needed, what options were available to them, and so on.

> The thing was interacting with other people, you know … How will you interact when you don't even know where things are happening? You cannot. I cannot because I don't even have money. So, there was no interaction at all. If you don't have money and you don't have the resources to navigate around, you know, that was another big challenge (Abeo - M, AS, Nigeria, 40–45).

Thirdly, a significant finding was the dilemmas around social networks. The asylum seeker and refugee populations in Glasgow were diverse, and social networks among them facilitated their access to services, feelings of inclusion and integration. Participants provided several examples that emphasised the role of social networks. Their accounts highlighted that the vast majority of ASRs interacted and spent more time with others from a similar background for numerous reasons: a lack of knowledge about their new locality, fear of the unknown, lack of English skills, encounters with discrimination and the appeal of cultural commonality. These reasons, in whole or part, perhaps led them to create their own communities within their new localities, forming groups of individuals to simulate a version of Syria, Sudan or Iran. Jurgenson (2012:13) explains it as 'the homeland is not abandoned, but taken along to a new country'. Being with people from their countries of origin created a sense of their homeland in Glasgow and helped them to feel normal.

Exclusion and discrimination led ASRs to recreate ethnically homogenous groups in Glasgow. The existence of these strong ethnic groups aptly illustrated the degree of ASRs' feelings of rejection or exclusion by the mainstream society, based on their ethnic, religious and language differences.

Simply put, their tendency to form homogenous groups based on ethnicity could be seen as a consequence of locals pushing the newcomers away and rejecting them from getting involved in the locality. ASRs acknowledged that their differences were apparent, and thus they struggled or failed to adapt to their new environment. The failure to adapt and lack access to resources resulted in creating stronger ethnic-based communities rather than building networks with locals. In the context of ASRs in a new environment, ethnic enclosure facilitates their access to resources, for example, employment opportunities through social networks (Patacchini and Zenou, 2012).

Nevertheless, several interviewees pointed out that strong ethnic groups might hinder ASRs' integration in their society. Klaesson and Öner (2020) highlight that the concentration of ethnic enclosure keeps immigrants at a certain distance from local mainstream society and available opportunities. In other words, although ethnic enclosure fosters strong in-group interactions and networks, it can also reduce interactions with locals in their society. Creating or having groups formed solely on the basis of characteristics such as ethnicity and religion may keep them in confined spaces and hinder their participation in wider societal activities. At some point, trying to create smaller versions of Syria or Iran could be seen as signs of them refusing to adapt to their locality.

> In my area, there are only five families. It is not enough to build a community. They must belong to their community like Scottish people. Different cultures. Culture is the main thing. We didn't see any problem for religion. I think everything is controlled here. No problem but for me, I am a Muslim and I can't accept any other culture for me. You must build a new community for us (Farid - M, R, Syria, 40–45).

It is undeniable that sometimes the purpose of this self-imposed or voluntary exclusion from the mainstream society was devised to maintain their identity and to create a sense of home. For instance, participants reported looking for jobs with employers who are associated with their ethnicity or religion or the country of origin. As a result, they developed socio-economic isolation from other community members.

> There are certain groups of asylum seekers and refugees, for example, people from Sudan. They just want to keep things to themselves. They don't want to network with other asylum seekers. They have got their own groups. Even in the English classes, they want the lecturers to be one of them. There was one charity, they asked me to come and to talk there; they are all Sudanese. I tried to interact but they didn't want to integrate. See, this is another thing; you create your own division and complain (Takudzwa - M, AS, Zimbabwe, 40–45).

Moreover, social isolation was commonly discussed in terms of newcomers and the wider society. However, participants shared experiences of everyday social isolation between and within the ASR population in Glasgow. Religious and ethnic differences between ASRs significantly affected their relationships and interaction with each other, despite sharing other common characteristics such as language, countries of origin, similar migration experiences and so on. However, more in-depth and sensitive religious and racial tensions among ASRs in Glasgow hindered their acceptance of each other. Consequently, the process of integration and inclusion became more complex and complicated, because ASRs could not accept fellow ASRs as part of their society in Glasgow. They brought in divisions applied in their countries of origin to their host country. By applying such practices, they kept themselves excluded from certain groups of people from their country of origin.

For instance, those who changed their religion following migration experienced social isolation within their own community, as the conversion was not accepted by fellow ASRs. For instance, Farhad (M, R, Iran, 35–40) shared an example of 'new Christians', those who followed Islam in Iran and converted to Christianity during their migration journey and were thus looked down upon by fellow Iranians in Glasgow. Mustafa (M, AS, Iraq, 40–45**)** shared experiences of feeling isolated from his own Iraqi community. He converted to Christianity when he was an asylum seeker in Germany. Consequently, social networks were disrupted for such people even though they were devoted to Islam in the past, understood the associated religious practices, lived with Muslims back home and felt confident engaging with other Muslims. Mustafa reflected upon a recent experience he had of being rejected by a fellow Iraqi because he was no longer a Muslim.

> … one day we [his family] made strawberry jam and we just tried to give a jar of jam to a Muslim woman with kids. She was very poor and her husband had left her in bad condition. She said, 'I don't eat jam'. I told her that this is not ham or pork [to address the halal concern]. This is something you can eat. It's just jam. She said, 'I don't want anything from you'. All this happened because I am not a Muslim. So, when they discovered that I am a Christian, they stopped interacting with me. They stopped coming to my house and eating my food.

Additionally, social isolation expanded to cross-ethnic networks in Glasgow. The significant differences between ASRs often undermined the common characteristics they shared, such as similar migration experiences, language and religion. There were instances where participants chose not to spend time or engage with people from different countries, religion and ethnicity. In particular, interviews reflected that not all of them were interested in or comfortable with interacting with ASRs from their countries of origin. During one interview, Bilal (M, AS, Pakistan, 40–45) stated that he did not wish to have a flatmate from a different country to his own. Although he acknowledged the fact that asylum seekers went through similar experiences of having endured dangerous journeys and then encountered the hostile asylum process in the UK, he preferred to have someone from Pakistan. This indicated that his priority was to live with someone who would share similar cultural and social values.

Furthermore, Amina (F, R, Sudan, 40–45) shared her experience of exclusionary practices within the ASR community. She recounted an incident that had occurred at the charity where she and I were volunteering together. This particular incident demonstrated the ethnic-based discrimination that happened in the daily lives of ASRs living in Glasgow. Amina stated:

> I was cooking with three other volunteers from Ghana and Eritrea. There was this lady; I think she was from Pakistan [Amina recognised her as a Pakistani based on the language and dress code]. She came to me and asked, is this halal food? It must be obvious from my appearance that it must be halal. I was wearing my headscarf so they should know I am a Muslim and I only do halal food. I said yes but it was very strange that she repeated that question 3 times. [At that point] I felt the discrimination; I am also from the same religion as that woman from Pakistan – maybe she didn't accept me or other people [as

> Muslims]. Yes, there was lots of discrimination inside the same society because people differentiate minorities inside one religion like Shia and Sunni and other things.

Indeed, several participants said that they felt frustrated when they were isolated and excluded by people from a similar background. The examples they gave demonstrated that differences between individuals in terms of religion, ethnicity, culture, values and norms significantly shaped their level of engagement. In particular, differences among the ASR population posed a greater risk of separating them from each other. While they acknowledged every one of them had endured difficult migration journeys, certain differences such as religion and ethnicity had been valued more among certain groups of people. Integration interventions are intended to focus on every ASR regardless of their religious or political beliefs; yet people did not often work together due to their disparity and associated problems. Consequently, disparity amongst members of the ASR population caused problems, especially in RCOs where certain individuals had been excluded from the support process.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the role of formal and informal social protection in promoting integration and inclusion for ASRs in Glasgow. Findings suggest that formal social protection has played a significant role in various aspects of integration. Firstly, participants perceived access to formal social protection as a key facet of their integration in Glasgow. They felt the ability to access key services created a sense of signified acceptance. In particular, formal social protection contributed to the fulfilment of participants' basic needs and facilitated opportunities for them to focus on other important aspects of integration. Furthermore, the third sector contributed to ASRs' integration in several ways; they filled the gaps created by the limited amount of state support and the specific integration activities they offered helped participants be involved in society.

Informal social protection contributed to participants' ability to integrate by providing information and assistance to navigate the bureaucratic processes

in accessing formal social protection. Participants maintained two significant types of social networks: ethnic and cross-ethnic. In these groups, interviewees built social bonds with people sharing a similar ethnicity and from their countries of origin, as well as cross-ethnic networks that included other ASRs and locals. Volunteering played a crucial role in offering participants opportunities to integrate and get involved in their new locality. Volunteering provided crucial material resources and financial benefits, which increased ASRs' chances of survival. Also, informal social protection had been promoted through the volunteering work where participants interacted with others.

Nevertheless, several aspects of formal and informal social protection elements became barriers to integration and inclusion. Formal social protection was revealed to be insufficient for asylum seekers to meet their daily needs; thus, they sought alternative ways to supplement their resources, which lowered their motivation to engage in integration activities. Additionally, refugees struggled to achieve integration due to the bureaucratic demands of receiving social benefits. Disparity among the ASR population created divisions among them. While there was always a division between newcomers and locals, the findings of this research identified further divisions within ethnic social networks and between cross-ethnic social networks, which affected their interactions and integration. When considered together, these barriers have the power to significantly shape ASRs' experiences of integration and inclusion in Glasgow.

8. Chapter Eight: Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis has presented an analysis of the social protection experiences of ASRs living in Glasgow centring on three aspects: social protection (formal, informal and semi-formal social protection); vulnerability; and integration and inclusion. This chapter provides a summary of the main empirical findings that represent the contribution to the literature while discussing the relationship between my research's contribution to knowledge and the conceptual framework. I then outline recommendations for policy and suggest avenues for further research.

8.1. Empirical findings and contributions to the literature

Forcibly displaced people find themselves in a vulnerable position, requiring a range of social protection mechanisms to address the difficulties that arise and contribute to vulnerability (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). Social protection mechanisms are made available to both asylum seekers and refugees; however, it was challenging for many participants to fully access and use them, demonstrating that access deserves further attention in Glasgow. Chapter 5 investigates ASRs' social protection experiences in terms of housing, healthcare, education and financial benefits. Within that, I examined the ways the state, the third sector and social networks addressed ASRs' social protection needs. By doing so, this especially illustrated social protection assemblages that ASRs implemented to achieve their overall social protection.

Participants' experiences of formal support (housing, financial benefits, education and healthcare) highlighted that the main barrier for ASRs was their access to formal social protection elements to satisfy their basic needs and live a better quality of life. Specifically, analysis of participants' experiences indicated inadequate formal social protection for ASRs in Glasgow (Chapter 5). Previous research has demonstrated that the formal provision is not adequate in the UK (for example, see (Allsopp, Sigona and Phillimore, 2014; Cheung and Phillimore, 2014; Mulvey, 2015; Guentner et al., 2016). This research expanded on existing knowledge of inadequate formal support and

consequent impacts. Significantly, during their asylum process, asylum-seeking participants depended on the limited weekly allowance the state provided, which they viewed as humiliating or insulting because they could not have a dignified life with such low financial support. Low levels of financial support forced participants to become destitute and affected their ability to meet and maintain their nutritional requirements, keep up with the transport costs for mobility and access to services, communication capabilities and other individual needs. Sometimes participants could not get the right kind or adequate amount of food for their specific diet, and their self-respect was challenged due to their inability to buy additional clothes. Although the literature above explored asylum seekers' destitution, there was a lack of emphasis on asylum seekers' coping mechanisms. My research found that forced destitution led participants to take drastic measures, such as adjusting their needs, including reducing food intake, changing food habits and cutting down their children's toys and extracurricular activities. An original finding of this research was that, alongside these extreme measures, participants used volunteering as a way to support themselves. The volunteering allowance TSOs provided increased participants' purchasing power and the ability to manage their needs.

Analysis highlighted asylum accommodation to be sub-standard and inadequate for an individual to have dignified living conditions. While this was usually a problem encountered by almost every asylum seeker, Chapter 5 also revealed that the basic expectations and needs of ASRs significantly shaped their experiences of social protection that led to situational angst. Most importantly in the dispersed asylum accommodation, participants experienced challenges because of the need to share a kitchen, bathroom and living with people they did not know. It was a significant finding that asylum seekers were not happy sharing their dispersed accommodation with other people with whom they had no relationship. Such living conditions limited asylum seekers' opportunity for privacy and autonomy in their accommodation. Different religious practices, everyday routines and personal habits such as sleeping, smoking and drinking created tension among cohabiting residents. There are existing studies of housing issues of ASRs

(Phillips, 2006; Netto, 2011b), the particular issue of situational angst has not been emphasised; thus, this research has extended knowledge about ASRs' housing challenges. The research findings further indicated that bridging the gap between refugees' housing demands and expectations and what is realistically available in Glasgow was a complicated issue and, more broadly, showed a disparity between the host society's vision on deservingness and that of the ASRs.

Findings also indicated that ASRs were not satisfied with the ESOL classes in Glasgow. Several studies highlight the quality of provision and a lack of availability of language classes for ASRs in the UK (Cheung and Phillimore, 2014; Slade and Dickson, 2020). Gender and associated family duties was a key issue that shaped participants' ability and motivation to access social protection. In this research, a dilemma around women ASRs and their access to language classes and other educational opportunities was highlighted. Slade and Dickson's (2020) recent study also suggests that women ASRs experience significant barriers in access to language classes and other educational opportunities. Slade and Dickson (2020) highlight that gender-based duties enforced by cultural expectations played a significant role in limiting educational opportunities. Specifically, this research found that in contrast to women with children, single women pursued ESOL and other non-advanced courses. There were also examples of swapped family duties where male participants looked after their children and carried out other domestic duties to help their wives pursue self-development.

Throughout Chapter 5, findings emphasised that hostile immigration policies limited ASRs' access to sufficient formal social protection. Immigration policies have been widely criticised for negative impacts on asylum seekers and this research has contributed to the existing literature by highlighting the impacts of the hostile wider UK policies. As scholars highlight, formal service provision is determined by migrants' legal status (Sales, 2002; Mulvey, 2015) and 'even where formal provision is available, the displaced population may not have rights to the provision' (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019: 8). While refugees had full access, asylum seekers' access was limited for housing, education, financial benefits and healthcare, significantly affecting their aspirations for a

better quality of life. Beyond enduring their vulnerable position, asylum seekers had to deal with the effects of the dispersal policy and the asylum accommodation process (Phillips, 2006; Dwyer and Brown, 2008; Netto, 2011a). Under the current UK asylum system, asylum seekers are not entitled to participate in full-time education, while the Scottish Government encourages them to enrol for ESOL and non-advanced courses, which was a great opportunity for those with educational aspirations.

Furthermore, ASRs' lack of awareness of their rights and insufficient knowledge about available services affected their access to formal social protection (O'Donnell et al., 2008; Doyle and O'Toole, 2013). In their recent study, Strang and Quinn (2019) indicate that refugees have a low awareness of the range of existing services in Glasgow. Similarly, my research found a lack of awareness to be significant in ASRs' access to formal social protection. It was mainly reflected in refugee participants' narratives as a dilemma caused in the transition from asylum seeker to the refugee status. The main problem encountered by many participants was their uncertainty about their entitlements to financial (social) benefits and housing. It was often affected by their past experience during the asylum process, where the housing and financial benefit process was managed by and facilitated through NASS. Despite the issue of entitlements awareness, findings also indicated that participants struggled to understand the process (Papadopoulos et al., 2004; Spicer, 2008; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017) especially the bureaucratic procedures, which were computerised and often required support from others. Findings illustrated that most participants had a limited understanding of the system for managing housing support, using health services and claiming benefits – structural, logistical and mundane difficulties that have been partly overlooked in previous research.

Limited awareness of their rights to formal social protection and the supporting system was caused by the inadequate information and support given by service providers. A lack of information prevented participants from making use of available services and led to inappropriate use and errors (Ager and Strang, 2008; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017). In their recent study about the information needs of Syrians in Scotland, Martzoukou and

Burnett (2018) claim that information needs left unmet are significant among refugees and there is a huge requirement to develop everyday information literacy within the context of their new society, which my research fully supports.

Participants' access to formal social protection was also limited due to inadequate additional support given by service providers, but required by ASRs with a lack of awareness of the system and poor English capacity. Strang, Baillot and Mignard (2017) conclude that refugees with and without strong English skills might require additional support to access services in Glasgow. Refugees who enter the mainstream social welfare system faced specific challenges relating to inadequate support from service providers. Once they received their status, refugees' expectations were to become part of the high- or low-skilled workforce and contribute to their local socio-cultural economy; however, participants considered the support provided to them to be inadequate. Similarly, Shutes (2011: 566) indicated that although refugees were given information about finding a job, 'this minimal assistance was particularly inadequate for those with needs for English language provision'.

Nonetheless, this thesis identified a significant finding when examining how ASRs combined different forms of social protection to achieve access to above mentioned formal support. The analysis of participants' experiences points to the fact that almost all of the time, ASRs engage in social protection assemblages. This finding indicates that ASRs engaged in assemblages due to the inadequate formal (state) support provided to them. For instance, obtaining household items through social connections and TSOs; filling the gap created by the lack of financial support (asylum allowance) by utilising the support from TSOs who receive public donations (food, clothes and household items); to increase their chances of learning, participating in language classes that TSOs provided while waiting to be enrolled in a college; gathering information through their social networks and TSOs and using them to communicate with service providers, and so on. Based on participants' experiences of making use of various – formal, informal and semi-formal – forms of social protection, this chapter problematised the boundaries between different forms of social protection and emphasised the importance of looking

at multiple combinations of mechanisms ASRs use to access social protection. Asylum seekers' coping mechanisms particularly highlighted the use of social protection assemblages, when asylum seekers combine formal, informal and semi-formal mechanism to achieve overall social protection.

Despite the availability of social protection services, findings presented in Chapter 6 pointed towards the vulnerabilities created by the state-led formal and available informal social protection in Glasgow and associated liminalities. It must be emphasised that this chapter attempted to explore the specific vulnerabilities ASRs faced rather than constructing them as vulnerable or passive recipients. Findings of my research have demonstrated that ASRs living in Glasgow face powerlessness and deprivation and experience a lack of wellbeing that has increased their vulnerability. Their negative experiences of adjustment and settlement have been affected by several factors: their status, long periods of time awaiting a decision on their asylum claims, a lack of opportunities to participate in community activities and the restrictions associated with their immigration status, and specifically, employment. This research has, however, delved deeper into the everyday life and the more mundane aspects of ASRs' experiences of social protection, highlighting the impact – the support and barriers – that this system poses on their adaptation and settlement process in Glasgow.

A significant number of participants' accounts represented their views of not being in control of their lives in Glasgow, through their expression of frustration over 'lost time'. However, they showed eagerness to 'begin or plan for a life' and start 'living a normal life', meaning having family, friends, home, employment, and living like other local members in their society. For all the participants, anticipating a normal life was the only positive outcome of their waiting. The findings suggest that normal life could bring back a sense of control, autonomy and ability to build a future for asylum seekers in Glasgow.

Therefore, on the one hand, as suggested by Kirkwood et al. (2015), asylum seekers avoided making direct criticisms about asylum support, particularly to avoid being seen as ungrateful in the host country. Several participants presented themselves as grateful for the support provided, regardless of

restrictions on their rights to formal social protection and a lack of opportunities to participate in their location. Asylum seekers appreciated the asylum support contrasting their situation to previous experiences of having no support and stressful living conditions. On the other hand, the sole purpose of asylum seekers and their claims was to have a safe and secure life in the UK. Though they criticised the state for a lack of formal support, participants appreciated even the low levels of support and survived. Although asylum seekers survive awaiting the normal life they wish for, it is difficult to achieve for many of them, and lack of support had implications for their social inclusion and integration.

Further analysis indicated that the disruption caused to ASRs' expected life by policies has been considered as 'policy-imposed liminality' (Hynes, 2011). Although participants wished to have a 'normal life', in reality, this was challenging to achieve because of the time they spent not doing any meaningful activity, not contributing through employment, and living in limbo with an uncertain future, which was difficult to manage. It was reflected particularly strongly in asylum seekers' inability to work. Participants talked about and often stated 'we cannot do anything' to express their frustration at the restrictions imposed on them. These results are in line with previous studies showing that having no employment opportunities contributed to negative experiences (Bloch, 2000a; Phillimore and Goodson, 2006; Mulvey, 2010, 2015). For all the participants, being formally employed or engaging in any income generation activities was associated with improved self-respect, moral duty and sense of belonging. While participants adopted a daily routine and had opportunities to participate in activities organised by TSOs, these activities lacked the meaningfulness they sought during their asylum process. Compared with the importance of employment, asylum seekers said that activities such as learning English, studying other courses or volunteering were less significant. The absence of this key right was also considered to be a barrier to feeling included and belonging in their locality.

In line with previous research (Burchett and Matheson, 2010; Quinn, 2014) the findings of my study suggest that an inability to work during the asylum process influenced asylum seekers' negative experiences and contributed to

their diminished sense of wellbeing. Legal restrictions affecting asylum seekers' eligibility to work negatively affected their dependence on asylum support and contributed to feelings of shame, exacerbated by their inability to engage in employment and contributing to their feelings of loneliness and isolation, which compounded their marginalisation. Furthermore, findings also indicated that being an asylum seeker with limited social protection was detrimental to their wellbeing. ASRs clearly expressed in the interviews that living in asylum accommodation posed a challenge to their wellbeing due to the low standard of housing in undesirable locations. Their living conditions were identified as an integral part of their poor wellbeing whereby participants did not feel welcome and had few opportunities to feel included and participate in their new locality. Additionally, having few opportunities to contribute to society, either through work, volunteering, or by other means, can cause low self-esteem, feelings of powerlessness and alienation (Quinn, 2014; Strang and Quinn, 2019). In particular, existing with feelings of anxiety, isolation, loneliness, shame, and powerlessness, and the negative effects of awaiting an outcome while living in fear of being deported have also been reported in previous studies on asylum seekers (Stewart, 2005; Green, 2006; Burchett and Matheson, 2010; Vathi and King, 2013; Quinn, 2014).

The challenges over the sense of having a normal life and wellbeing indicated Yuval-Davis, Anthias and Kofman's (2005: 521) claim of that 'the construction of boundaries and borders that differentiate between those who belong and those who do not, determines the particular belonging'. In line with that asylum seekers' subjective feelings of the activities they engaged in and the conditions of their daily life while they wait for a decision illustrated a lack of sense of belonging in Glasgow, which is also reflected in the existing literature (Spicer, 2008; Mulvey, 2010; Quinn, 2014). In the participants' narratives, the asylum process was considered to be a period of liminality and permanent temporariness. This period was criticised for disrupting asylum seekers' aspirations of having a normal and dignified life in Glasgow. During the period of limbo, uncertainty was not the only problem for asylum seekers, but also the permanent nature of temporariness of the asylum process and their overall life.

There was a common temporal dimension of waiting time during which there is normally a feeling of limitless waiting and sense of ‘not knowing’. Participants expressed a sense of having ‘lost time’, and their inability to predict the decision of asylum claims and their uncertainty ‘paused their life’. In particular, the findings suggest that asylum seekers must wait a long time for refugee status and until then they have time in hand to achieve their goals; yet, they often cannot do this because they live in limbo.

Moreover, the findings of this study suggested that the asylum process led asylum seekers to become stressed, making them feel powerless, and as if they lacked control and agency (Vathi and King, 2013). Their everyday experience was shaped by challenging living conditions, lack of opportunities for meaningful activities (employment), policy-imposed liminalities and extended waiting time. The findings reflected asylum seekers’ marginal position, contributing to the disruption of normal life and resulting in a low level of satisfaction in their daily activities in Glasgow. These situations involving vulnerability serve to emphasise the need for social protection, first, in providing support for their basic social welfare needs, and secondly, as a vehicle for social inclusion and long-term integration.

While the participants’ accounts emphasised the need for social protection, as illustrated in Chapter 7 several stated that a lack of access to formal social protection affected their ability to integrate into and feel included in Glasgow. They felt that integration and inclusion did not merely involve the presence of services but significantly depended on their ability to access them. Individual participants did not have the capacity to advocate for their access to formal social protection, and therefore, they accessed the third sector and social networks to fill the gaps in their social protection and to facilitate integration. Migrants’ access to these mechanisms are widely highlighted by scholars (Ager and Strang, 2004b; Wren, 2004, 2007; Spicer, 2008; Strang and Ager, 2010; Faist et al., 2015; Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018; Bilecen, 2019). Participants used social networks and TSOs not only to facilitate their access to formal social protection but also for the purposes of integration and inclusion, which once again highlights the role of social protection in facilitating inclusion and integration.

Evidence emerged that ASRs draw on social ties with friends, other ASRs and community members to increase their access to services, demonstrating a converse link between social integration and social protection. Although the dispersal policy separated participants from their existing contacts, the findings also showed informal social protection – social networks, including family, friends, local members of society and other ASRs – remained important to facilitate their access to services and for integration and inclusion.

The existence of local ethnic networks and RCOs were seen as vital because those who came to Glasgow had no knowledge of available services, institutions, local social support and most importantly the Scottish approach towards ASRs. Although scholars suggest those new refugees might not be in a strong position to use their social networks to access services (Phillimore, 2012; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2017), the findings of this study suggest that participants reached out to others by using their social networks early in the process (depending on their needs). The support offered by social networks often enabled newcomers to gain social connections (bonds, bridges and links) which helped them to address bureaucratic barriers, information gaps and other practical challenges. In particular, social networks shared cultural, economic, social and political information to facilitate the process of settlement and inclusion. For instance, cultural events organised as part of wider networks provided participants with the opportunity to occasionally meet people from their countries of origin and other ASRs to share information and interact; these meetings helped them gain important information and better access to formal social protection. Moreover, the findings emphasised the social connections established and maintained through online social networks, for example, Facebook groups.

In addition to informal social networks, TSOs as formal social protection providers significantly contributed to ASRs' integration and inclusion in Glasgow. In the context of ASRs and service provision, scholars highlight the gap-filling role of TSOs (Wren, 2004, 2007; Spencer, 2011; Mayblin and James, 2019). Spencer (2011: 216) argued that the level of support provided by TSOs to ASRs 'has never proved sufficient to address the disproportionate

unemployment or broader challenges they experience'. However, the findings of this study acknowledge the significant role the third sector played. As reflected in the empirical findings TSOs play a significant gap-filling role by providing subsistence support, facilitating interactions between ASRs and the local community (event attendees). Some of those organisations increased participants' self-confidence and self-esteem by involving them in decision-making about their daily activities. Wren (2004, 2007) identifies similar findings in a study about the role of multi-agency networks in Glasgow; this thesis extends the existing literature on the third sector in Glasgow.

In this study, volunteering has proven to be an effective way to access social protection in Glasgow. While ASRs have been seen largely as passive and as receivers of formal support, the findings of this thesis recognise volunteering as an active tool and support-seeking strategy for ASRs. Several studies conducted in the UK highlight volunteering as a tool for refugee integration and inclusion (Spencer, 2004; Phillimore and Goodson, 2010; Mulvey, 2013; Strang and Quinn, 2014; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016). The existing literature refers to volunteering as a vital element to promote social connections, gain a sense of purpose and improve skills that could help them to enter the labour market (Mulvey, 2013; Basedow and Doyle, 2016; Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016). Volunteering also increases ASRs' ability to help other ASRs (Strang, Baillot and Mignard, 2016).

Yet, scholars focus more on the contributions of volunteering to employment prospects rather than social connections. In particular, the New Scots 2018 promoted volunteering of ASRs in terms of improving their employment prospects and social connections that could facilitate learning English and wellbeing. As this strategy highlights, 'volunteering can offer some of the same benefits that working provides including opportunities to use and develop skills; a sense of purpose; and links to other people in the community' (Scottish Government, 2018: 35).

While acknowledging the existing literature, this thesis makes a further contribution to it by emphasising the role of volunteering as a unique means of filling gaps created by formal social protection, promoting integration and

inclusion of ASRs. Findings indicate that ASRs considered volunteering as a way to engage with their local community, interact and support themselves and others. Volunteering was a significant part of asylum seekers' experience because the UK government's policy excludes them from the workforce and restricts their ability to contribute to society in this way. In other words, participants viewed establishing social connections and being part of the local community as ways to improve their daily encounters and life in Glasgow. Additionally, volunteering often provided opportunities to practise and learn English and provided an environment where they could feel they were doing something meaningful. Significantly, volunteering was seen as a way to overcome social isolation and loneliness. Furthermore, the volunteer allowance helped to top up their food and transportation costs, so participants saved it and spent it on other transport costs. Despite previous lack of attention given to the financial and material benefits of volunteering, this thesis advances empirical evidence on the role of volunteering.

Findings predominantly focused on ASRs; yet, staff from service-providing organisations often echoed the issues that ASRs raised. The findings of this research have highlighted the areas where services were lacking or difficult for ASRs. At the Glasgow level, staff recognised the need for better access to services for ASRs that promote and facilitate integration and inclusion. Although the statutory service providers are working towards providing a good quality of support, the wider UK policies and their inability to contest those hostile polices questioned the level of support provided to ASRs. Under the NASS, asylum seekers are provided with limited support and once they received their refugee status, they must take full responsibility to access welfare benefits. However, findings of this study revealed that statutory agencies face multiple challenges in providing adequate and appropriate support to ASRs. Specifically, staff pointed out the insufficient resourcing and issues in coordination, for example, asylum housing provision in Glasgow. Furthermore, the third sector staff reported the gaps in service provision and emphasised the crucial role TSOs played in filling those gaps. This highlights the need to consider and address gaps in formal support to meet ASRs' complex needs and for their integration and social inclusion. Moreover, the

Scottish policies and integration approaches have been widely referred to as significant in improving the lives of ASRs in Glasgow.

Experiences of ASRs and staff from service-providing organisations *highlight the importance of locality in social protection, service provision, integration and social inclusion*. In particular, scholars call for more attention to the local context and its impact on ASRs' lives, integration and inclusion (Bauloz, Vathi and Acosta, 2019; Phillimore, 2020). This research contributes to the knowledge through illustrating various ways in which locality has shaped ASRs' social protection and integration outcomes. Primarily, from a policy level, New Scots integration strategies have been praised for facilitating and promoting ASRs' access to services and integration. Specifically, Scottish approach to the integration of anyone from day one of their arrival established a strong platform for positive integration and inclusion. In addition, in comparison to other cities in the UK, TSOs' involvement in ASRs' integration in Glasgow is a significant representation of the role of local context in service delivery.

Finally, my fieldwork experience in Glasgow contributes to the existing literature on researching ASRs. I spent four months in Glasgow as a researcher and volunteer interviewing ASRs and staff from service-providing organisations while observing ASRs' interactions in TSOs and other occasions. I experienced how a researcher's identity and positionality such as ethnicity, country of origin and accent could shape the research process. While my non-UK ethno-specific characteristics helped me to get closer to some ASRs, it also created a gap between me and other ASRs because particular groups ASRs preferred to engage with people similar to their background. Fieldwork experience revealed that the local context (participants' local environment) can influence the research process. Volunteering in TSOs proved effective in facilitating a researcher's opportunities to meet and interact with ASRs and staff. It also assisted me as a researcher to become an insider to observe interactions, actions and service provision.

8.2. Contributions to knowledge

This thesis contributes theoretically to the studies of migration and social protection. I adopted the framework of social protection as the key concept and show the importance and effectiveness of contextualising ASRs and social protection. The existing literature suggests that social protection is essential for people who are made vulnerable for various reasons, including persecution, conflicts and displacement (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). While the majority of the literature examines social protection for vulnerable populations in the Global South, there has been limited attention to social protection for ASRs (see, for example, Serra Mingot and Mazzucato 2018). Sainsbury (2012) describes the vulnerability of ASRs in terms of their immigrant rights, the specific rights and restrictions for immigrants' access to social welfare. While refugees should receive the same treatment as an ordinary resident, asylum seekers have minimal or no rights to formal social provision. With that background, the concept of social protection was applied to understand the available social protection provisions for ASRs and how they use them for their protection.

Findings indicate the implementation of several forms of formal and informal social protection to assist ASRs; for example, financial support for asylum seekers to cater for their food requirements, clothes and other needs; information dissemination through social networks and TSOs. Additionally, refugees have been given financial benefits to look after themselves until they find employment. Formal social protection remained crucial for ASRs, and, in particular, the state played a significant role in providing them with housing, education, financial benefits and healthcare. However, ASRs' access to formal social protection is restricted by discriminatory practices and institutional structures, English language barriers and the organisation of welfare (Sales, 2002). Consequently, ASRs need more support to access the necessary formal social provisions and these challenges leave ASRs relying on informal social protection to access services. In this context, social networks played a significant role in shaping ASRs' degree of access to social protection (Phillimore, 2012). ASRs formed ties with ethnic and cross-ethnic (including the mainstream society members) networks to facilitate their access

to services and achieve their needs. Social networks were often readily available and reliable sources of support to address gaps in the availability and accessibility of formal social protection.

Furthermore, contextualising social protection within ASR literature highlighted the effective role played by TSOs as providers of formal social protection, which is often situated within state-led initiatives in the UK. Generally, the state claims to be providing adequate support for ASRs in the UK; however, studies claim that there is a lack of adequate support provided by the state for ASRs in the UK (Mayblin, 2017). In the asylum and refugee context, TSOs are crucial for ASRs' access to social protection arrangements, considered particularly important in the UK where the political context is hostile towards ASRs.

The findings of this dissertation demonstrated that while the state offered support for asylum seekers (for example, weekly asylum allowance, housing and education), the degree of such provision is often inadequate. Asylum seekers therefore rely on assistance from NGOs, charities and faith-based organisations. Sabates-Wheeler (2019: 8) indicates the third sector *'plays a critical role in provision […] meaning that it has a non-political mandate for ensuring the protection and welfare of displaced groups in need'*. The empirical chapters included in this thesis offer ample evidence to support this statement and to emphasise the third sector's role in the context of ASRs. For instance, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 7, TSOs facilitate ASRs' access to social protection by providing semi-formal social protection (see section 5.2.2).

Overall, the application of a social protection framework recognised the importance of informal social protection while examining the practices of the state and the third sector and formal social protection policies. The access and use of formal and informal mechanisms within the ASR context have been outlined in the empirical chapters and the thesis has highlighted the different forms of support provided by the formal and informal social protection mechanisms. In particular, the findings emphasised the importance of non-

state actors in understanding the social protection mechanisms available for ASRs.

Meanwhile, dilemmas in access to formal support made ASRs seek out social networks, voluntary and community organisations to satisfy their welfare needs (Sales, 2002; Mayblin and James, 2019). Therefore, while acknowledging the wider studies on the roles of the welfare state and social networks, this thesis stresses the need to look at social protection as a combination of formal and informal mechanisms. In existing studies, scholars adopt a similar view (Amelina et al., 2012; Faist, 2013; Bilecen and Barglowski, 2015; Faist et al., 2015). These studies note that migrants use a combination of multiple resources rather than dividing them into formal and informal mechanisms. In these studies, clear-cut distinctions of formal and informal social protection are problematised to understand how migrants use them to access social protection.

The findings of this thesis demonstrate the ways *ASRs strategised formal, informal and semi-formal mechanisms to access social protection in Glasgow*. Excerpts from the interviews have contributed to understanding the blurred boundaries between formal and informal social protection. ASRs required formal services to satisfy their basic needs; at the same time, they used informal social networks to facilitate their access to formal services. For instance, refugees had access to social housing and social benefits, and yet despite their entitlements, they depended on social networks to gather relevant and adequate information. Acknowledging the existing literature on social protection for migrants, this thesis contributes to a comprehensive analysis of the state, third sector and social network roles used by ASRs.

Moreover, this thesis contributes to the literature by highlighting the presence of *semi-formal mechanisms*. It is a social protection arrangement widely used in the development literature (Devereux and Getu, 2013), while several studies touch upon it in the context of migration (Boccagni, 2016; Serra Mingot and Mazzucato, 2018). Semi-formal mechanisms are not publicly provided but they do operate as institutions with accountability mechanism (Devereux and Getu, 2013; Teshome, 2013; Serra Mingot and Mazzucato,

2018). Semi-formal social protection is mainly delivered by NGOs, faith-based organisations and community-based organisations using member contributions (Devereux and Getu, 2013). For instance, asylum seekers in the UK face food security issues due to the limited weekly allowance they receive. As part of the formal social protection, asylum seekers receive a limited weekly allowance and use it for their food purchases; yet, it is not enough to cover their needs. Meanwhile, there are no publicly funded food banks to support asylum seekers. In this case, an informal social protection mechanism has limited capacity to provide food security to migrants; however, it plays a significant role in sharing information about existing food banks, cooked meals and community kitchen projects.

While both the formal and informal social protection provisions cannot completely fill the gaps in social protection, asylum seekers turn to food banks, cooked meals and community kitchens provided by TSOs. As discussed above, such activities indicate the presence of a semi-formal protection mechanism that also fill the gaps when formal provisions are inadequate or absent (for example, see Devereux, 2015). Incorporating this mechanism contributed to a more holistic understanding of the social protection mechanisms used by ASRs. Accordingly, ASRs depend on all forms: formal, informal and semi-formal to fulfil their social protection needs.

Findings also illustrate the presence of assemblages. Participants' experiences suggest that they could not rely on either a formal or informal social protection mechanism to access social protection. As Bilecen and Barglowski (2015) state, social protection is an assemblage of multiple resources, where individuals constantly combine the use of formal and informal provisions. Participants often reached out to informal networks to gather information or get help to complete the bureaucratic process. Similar activities indicated ASRs used a combination of formal and informal mechanism for social protection. It should be highlighted that existing literature focusing on ASRs has not studied the application of assemblages.

As noted earlier in this section, social protection for migrants is often focused on the context of the receiving country. Migrants' access to social welfare has

been determined and restricted by immigration policy regimes and immigration status (for example, asylum seekers and refugees) (Sainsbury, 2006, 2013). The UK's hostile policy regime restricted and controlled ASRs' access to formal social protection, thus increasing their vulnerable position. With that background, in this thesis, I contextualise social protection for ASRs within the UK's immigration policy regime and Scotland's devolved formal support policies and show how those policies are facilitating and hindering ASRs' access to social protection. Subsequently, this study contributes to existing literature: firstly, by establishing clearer links between social protection and the migration system, secondly, by examining how ASRs are making use of different social protection mechanisms to meet their needs within a hostile immigration context in the UK, and thirdly, by analysing the impact that social protection has on social inclusion and integration.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature by establishing that formal, informal and semi-formal social protection mechanisms can be applied to different categories of migrations and different situations. It also highlights that social protection can be provided by various entities. Contextualising social protection within a host country perspective shows that states are not the only social protection providers for ASRs. TSOs perform a significant complementary and gap-filling role in the provision of social protection. Additionally, social networks facilitate ASRs' access to social protection while promoting integration and inclusion in mainstream society. Therefore, it is important to recognise the role played by informal and semi-formal social protection mechanisms.

Furthermore, social protection as a concept highlights the degree to which different actors deliver social protection for ASRs in different situations. In other words, the social protection context helps to identify the actors best-placed to deliver social protection (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). For ASRs who are often placed within a context of heavily restricted formal support or are faced with a lack of access to it, social protection mechanisms can play a significant role in reducing their vulnerabilities and filling the gaps in access.

8.3. Policy implications

In this section, I present some potential policy implications that derive from this study. Most of the participants recognised Glasgow as a friendly and welcoming city. In contrast to the UK government's approach to integration (occurring only after achieving refugee status), the Scottish strategy promotes integration from the moment an individual arrives in the country. This strategy ensures the presence of support organisations, especially the integration networks that assist ASRs in Glasgow. Although several participants expressed a feeling of being welcomed in different ways, the reality is that ASRs are still struggling to survive and they feel excluded. In particular, because of ASRs' living conditions (sub-standard housing in deprived areas), *the Scottish Government should take the necessary steps to ensure the provision of adequate formal social protection*.

The Scottish integration policy recognises ASRs' aspirations such as education and economic activities. While the policy provides basic social protection, there is also a need to expand and articulate ASRs' protection needs in a way that recognises their aspirations. In other words, *their subjective feeling of social protection, integration and inclusion should be examined against the type and degree of service provision.* For instance, asylum seekers can enrol in free ESOL and non-advanced courses but the places are limited, which in turn hinders their further education prospects.

This thesis illustrates how the asylum system (specifically NASS) created and affected asylum seekers' living conditions. A need to create a more humane asylum policy for asylum seekers in the UK was evident from participants' experiences. The UK government *should introduce strategies to overcome spatial, socio-economic and political vulnerabilities imposed on asylum seekers by the asylum system*. In particular, there is a significant need to address the forced destitution and the torment of temporariness. Although the UK government rarely indicates its concerns about asylum seekers' past experiences and living conditions, it should respect individuals' rights and provide better access to social protection.

The dilemmas between the devolved and reserved matters remained a significant difficulty for effective social protection and integration. The fact that immigration and asylum remain under the UK government's control poses more challenges to the Scottish Government. The empirical findings demonstrate how asylum seekers awaiting a decision defined their life as in a liminal and temporal position. The decision and level of support are determined by the Home Office, which does not consider the specific geographical and devolved government contexts. Consequently, the Scottish Government could not do much to overcome or address challenges faced by asylum seekers in Glasgow, and therefore, *a key policy implication would be that the Scottish Government should be allowed to decide the level of social protection for asylum seekers while the UK government holds on to their powers to decide the outcome of asylum claim*s. Even though giving the powers of service provision to the Scottish Government could undermine the general 'hostile environment' policy approach, I make detailed policy recommendations for each formal and informal element.

Moreover, throughout this research, I have demonstrated that a lack of knowledge of English was a major challenge for ASRs' access to and use of social protection services. *While it is not mandatory to learn, ASRs' ability to communicate in English is vital for their survival and integration*. A lack of proficiency in English adds more pressure on those newcomers who are yet to understand the system. Learning the language was not an easy task for many participants; therefore, social protection providers should have service provision focusing on ASRs. For instance, the Jobcentre process could have a separate system that could accommodate the language needs of refugees, including reduced demands, interpretation support and longer appointments.

Most of the participants depend on social benefits to survive in their daily lives because asylum seekers are not allowed to work and there are few employment opportunities for refugees. The participants' accounts suggest that they have the willingness and capacity for both low and highly skilled jobs. In particular, participants who possess good employment skills and experience expressed their willingness to engage in low-skilled jobs to provide for themselves. However, the potential benefit they offer to the workforce has

not been used because asylum seekers are kept unemployed until decisions are made about their asylum claims. Consequently, they depend on the state's asylum support for a minimum of six months and in many cases more than a year. A*sylum seekers must therefore be allowed to work at least a certain numbers of hours a week in selected roles and for employers approved by the authorities.* It would reduce their dependency on state support and eventually decrease the scale of public funds spent on asylum seekers, which can then be used for other areas of migration support.

The findings also indicated a significant gap in *participants' health literacy*. Although it was not a barrier for everyone, differences between their past healthcare systems in countries of origin and transit countries and the UK health service created confusion among some participants. During the interviews, ASRs demonstrated a lack of understanding about different services such as GP practices, walk-in-centres, accident and emergency, and so forth, coupled with their expectations. *There is a need, therefore, to educate newcomers about the available services in terms of what they can expect and use, when and how they can use them and what they cannot expect or do in certain aspects of healthcare services.* Educating ASRs could be achieved by increasing the number of awareness programmes delivered by the NHS GGC and reaching out to the most vulnerable ASR population. *Additionally, more information can be shared with ASRs by working with charities and RCOs.*

8.4. Conclusion and way forward

In conclusion, the empirical findings demonstrate a need for the state to address those concerns and dilemmas in access to formal social protection. The existing literature and the findings of this study confirm the state's continued failure to deliver adequate and proper social protection for ASRs. As noted earlier, the social and political motives of immigration policies have significantly hindered the provision and access to services. This thesis complements existing literature by presenting asylum seekers' ongoing disruption to their normal life. The Scottish Government emphasised the aim of enabling refugees to 'realise their full potential with the support of

mainstream services' (Scottish Government 2014). However, *the practical dilemmas of accessing mainstream services* continue to exist in Glasgow. For instance, while refugees have been encouraged to contribute to their new society by engaging in employment as soon as possible, it was challenging for them to access employment due a lack of opportunities and support.

In this thesis, the lens of social protection is adopted to examine ASRs' experiences of social protection in Glasgow. Emerging evidence indicates that social protection mechanisms for ASRs are available. However, structural failures to provide appropriate and adequate formal social protection challenge ASRs' adjustment, settlement and integration. While ASRs aspire to have a normal life and increase their freedom, the current social protection system interrupts their aspirations and results in increased demand for formal social protection, and dependency on the third sector and informal social protection.

Although the third sector and social networks could not satisfy the demands of ASRs, findings emphasise how ASRs are able to navigate through the system and mobilise and develop available social protection mechanisms to build towards a life with better adaptation and settlement. In this thesis, ASRs' social protection process demonstrates both the efficacy and instability of the different sources of support: the state, TSOs and social networks. The systematic and structural barriers to access and use formal social protection hinders ASRs' participation and contribution to society. Consequently, such exclusion challenges ASRs' ability to integrate into and be included in their society. As Sabates-Wheeler (2019) highlights, although social protection mechanisms are available, ASRs' vulnerable position makes it difficult to access and use the available resources.

This research adds to the knowledge about the asylum system's impacts, social protection mechanisms and integration and inclusion of ASRs. However, there are also issues or themes that emerged during the research, which could not be addressed due to the focus of this study. Examples include transnational social protection, mental health, the applicability of integration policy, and tensions between refugees who claimed their status via

the asylum process and those who arrived via special protection and settlement programmes. These are areas where more research is required to broaden our understanding and bring further insights into ASRs' experiences in Glasgow.

Social protection as a concept allowed me to focus on formal and informal social protection mechanisms. These mechanisms include key elements such as housing, education, healthcare, financial benefits and social networks. Social protection could be used in three focused ways to examine the experiences of ASRs. Firstly, a more in-depth analysis could be undertaken to understand the suitability of formal social protection elements, which are focused on fulfilling ASRs' daily needs for survival in a new country. Formal social protection contributes to creating a sense of positive living conditions for forced migrants. Nevertheless, the current hostile environment in the UK significantly creates dilemmas around access to formal social protection, which must be considered against this backdrop of restrictive immigration policies.

Secondly, informal social protection plays an important role in facilitating ASRs' access to and use of formal social protection. As newcomers to an unfamiliar society, ASRs are in a vulnerable position because they are estranged from their countries of origin and home communities. Against this background, informal social protection plays a crucial role in the daily lives of ASRs; this is because access to formal social protection in the new host country or society is often restricted due to political decisions, and access can be delayed until some months or years after arrival. Therefore, those who cannot access formal social protection depend on their informal and personal networks. Hence, it is necessary to examine the role of social networks in facilitating ASRs' access to formal social protection.

Thirdly, from the perspective of assemblages of social protection, further study can be commissioned to understand the combination of formal and informal social protection. This thesis highlights how ASRs often combine both of these mechanisms to access social protection, and hence an in-depth

focus on the assemblages of social protection could provide insight into how ASRs navigate through a new environment to survive.

This thesis also emphasises the role of TSOs. The third sector has been praised for their gap-filling role in providing social protection for ASRs. While TSOs depend on the state, they have taken initiatives to facilitate ASRs' access to services, integration and inclusion. An in-depth analysis could lead to better understanding the significant role played by the third sector. Furthermore, during the study, it also emerged that TSOs provide semi-formal social protection. For instance, organisations collected donations from individuals and distributed them to asylum seekers in need. It is something distinct from their formal role as they do not depend on the state for such provisions. Therefore, specific attention should be given to the third sector's semi-formal role, employing qualitative methods such as participant observation to provide a much more in-depth analysis of the way semi-formal forms of social protection function in relation to ASRs.

Findings also suggest that volunteering plays a significant role in ASRs' daily lives in Glasgow. In particular, ASRs engage in volunteering for financial and material benefits while it also helps them integrate into their community, indicating that there should be an in-depth study to understand the benefits and suitability of the volunteering roles of ASRs. Most importantly, a specific focus could be given to examining the role of volunteering in filling the gaps and facilitating the process of access to formal social protection.

Finally, there is a need to examine how the various immigration and integration policies affect ASRs in cities other than Glasgow. As the only dispersal city in Scotland, Glasgow puts its ASRs through a different support system from the rest of the UK. In particular, while there is a general asylum system across the UK, some services have been devolved to the Scottish Government, for example, healthcare and education, and an in-depth study at sub-national level is warranted.

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Appendices

A1. Participants' demographic information

Pseudonym	Legal Status	Nationality	Sex	Age	No of children	Education	Employment
Farid	R*	Syrian	M	40-45	2	BBA	Event management
Fatima	R	Syrian	F	45-50	2	BA	English Teacher and Interpreter
Alimah	R	Sudan	F	25-30	0	MBA	Unemployed
Takudzwa	AS**	Zimbabwe	M	40-45	1	College	Volunteer
Bilal	AS	Pakistan	M	Unspecified	0	High School	Unemployed
Akifa	R	Sudan	F	25-30	2	BA	Unemployed
Farhad	R	Iran	M	35-40	1	BBS	Recruitment and resource consultant
Jamshed	R	Iran	M	45-50	1	College	Unemployed
Gulzar	R	Sudan	M	30-35	0	Unspecified	Department Store
Aliyah	AS	Sudan	F	20-25	0	A/L	Unemployed
Mahdi	R	Syrian	M	25-30	3	Primary school	Unemployed
Danso	R	Congo	M	35-40	2	Unspecified	Driver
Abdo	AS	Sudan	M	25-35	0	BA	Unemployed
Tenneh	R	Sierra Leone	F	25-30	1	Unspecified	Unemployed
Namazzi	AS	Uganda	F	30-35	2	Unspecified	Unemployed
Mustafa	AS	Iraq	M	40-45	2	High School	Unemployed
Babar	AS	Pakistan	M	30-35	2	Secondary	Unemployed
Dalilah	AS	Egypt	F	30-35	3	Unspecified	Unemployed
Flora	R	Cameroon	F	35-40	2	Primary school	Unemployed
Jamal	R	Syrian	M	55-60	2	Unspecified	Unemployed
Zahir	AS	Iraq	M	25-30	0	College	Unemployed
Adiel	AS	Namibia	M	35-40	0	High School	Unemployed
Bokamoso	AS	Namibia	M	30-35	0	High School	Unemployed
Fabunni	AS	Namibia	M	30-35	0	Primary school	Unemployed
Abeo	AS	Nigeria	M	40-45	3	MA	Unemployed
Samuel	AS	Canada	M	40-45	0	High School	Unemployed
Asim	AS	Sudan	M	25-30	0	Primary school	Unemployed
Aleea	AS	Iraq	F	35-40	0	University	Unemployed
Amina	R	Sudan	F	40-45	2	University	Unspecified
Muhammed	R	Eritrea	M	35-40	2	Secondary	Unemployed

R = Refugee; AS = Asylum Seeker

A2. Semi-structured interview questions – ASRs

General experience

1. How would you describe your personal experiences of living in Glasgow in the first months/year of stay?
2. What kind of support have you needed at the beginning of your life in the UK? Did you manage to get access to them all?
3. Do you think there are different eligibility criteria in providing services for asylum seekers and refugees?

Social protection

4. Housing
    a. As a refugee/AS what are your rights and entitlements for housing?
    b. Who is responsible for providing housing for AS/R?
    c. Where do you live now?
    d. In the beginning, where did you go to find housing support?
    e. What is the mechanism/procedure to get a permanent house? (What did you do to obtain housing support?)
    f. Did you do anything to get the permanent house quickly?
    g. How long did you stay in temporary accommodation before moving to a permanent one?
    h. What are the outcomes of the services provided? Are you happy with the process?
    i. How do you manage the expenses? Are you paying for anything? Rent and other bills?
    j. What are the challenges/problems in housing?
    k. How did you manage to overcome these barriers and challenges?
    l. What is your experience in temporary and permanent housing?
    m. What do/did you do if you could not get the required services?
5. Education
    a. Do you know who is responsible for providing education support?
    b. Are you currently engaging in any educational courses?
    c. If not, why?
    d. What is the mechanism/procedure to access?
    e. Where did you go to access education support? What did you do to obtain education support?
    f. What are the outcomes of the services provided? Are you happy with the process?
    g. What are the barriers and challenges?
    h. How did you manage to overcome these barriers and challenges?
    i. What do you do if you could not get the required services?
6. Healthcare
    a. Where did you go to access healthcare support?
    b. Who is responsible for providing healthcare information?
    c. What is the mechanism/procedures to access? What did you do to obtain healthcare support?
    d. What are the outcomes of the services provided? Are you happy with the process?
    e. How long do you have to wait to get treatment?
    f. What are the problems in finding health support and treatment?
    g. How did you manage to overcome these barriers and challenges?
    h. What do you do if you could not get the required services?
7. Financial benefits
    a. Who is responsible for providing benefits for AS/R?

b. What are the available benefits?
c. Is asylum allowance adequate?
d. How do you spend your weekly allowance?
e. Are you receiving any social/Jobcentre benefits? Applied or planning to apply?
f. Where did you go to access mainstream benefits support?
g. What are the benefits you received/receive?
h. What is the mechanism/procedure for access? What did you do to obtain benefits?
i. How long did it take?
j. What are the outcomes of the services provided? Are you happy with the whole process and benefits?
k. What are the barriers and challenges?
l. How did you manage to overcome these barriers and challenges?
m. What do you do if you could not get the required services?

Overall experience:

8. What is your overall experience in obtaining these services?
9. Do you feel empowered
10. Do you think, your personal capabilities and characteristics affected your access to services?
11. Do you think your level of education and skills affect access to services?
12. Do you think your legal status and length of residence affect the access to services?
13. Do you think your country of origin affects access to services?

Relationship with service providers

14. Can you describe the level of interaction/relationship with your support worker?
15. How did the support worker handle the process?
16. Did you have any opportunities to share your voice in this process?
17. Did you/do you do something beyond the formal process to access services?
18. If the support was not available, what did you think of it?
19. How did it make you feel to ask for support?
20. Do you think the level of relationship that you had with your support worker affected your access to services?
21. Does the relationship with the support workers differ based on the authoritative level of the organisations (state/third sector)?

Integration

22. Are you familiar with the concept of integration?
23. What is your opinion about integration?
24. What is needed for integration?
25. Do you feel integrated into Glasgow? How and what makes you feel that?
26. If not, what do you need for integration?
27. How does access to all these services (social protection) shape/influence your day-to-day encounters/integration?

A3. Semi-structured interview questions – service providers

Social Protection

1. Could you describe your position and how what you do has some implications for asylum seekers and refugees (AS&R) in Glasgow?
2. What are your opinions about the most important characteristics of the systems of social protection?
3. Is social protection crucial for asylum seekers and refugees?
4. What is the basis for an individual's right for social protection?
5. What are the social protection outcomes for asylum seekers and refugees?
6. How does social protection shape/influence day-to-day life of asylum seekers and refugees?
7. What are the main types of social protection programmes and benefits available for asylum seekers and refugees in the UK?
    a. Which services do the newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees have access to?
    b. What are the initial mechanisms to provide services to asylum seekers and refugees?
8. What needs of asylum seekers and refugees exists that social protection should address? And who should address them?
9. What factors contribute to the barriers and successes of service provision?
    a. What are the main problems in providing services for asylum seekers and refugees?
    b. What are the physical, financial, relational and institutional constraints to service provision?

Access

10. How does your organisation overcome the constraints in service provision?
11. Do all asylum seekers and refugees have access to services?
12. What are the barriers faced by refugees in accessing services?
13. How do the differences between asylum seekers and refugee categories affect social protection?
    a. What are the differences in eligibility for, availability of and uptake of, social protection services among asylum seekers and refugees?
    b. Do social protection programmes cover all the categories of asylum seekers and refugees?
    c. Does social protection explicitly include or exclude benefits for asylum seekers and refugees?
14. In the absence of services, how do asylum seekers and refugees seek, obtain and negotiate relationship in order to access services?
15. Does the current location, length of residence and place of origin influence the service provision? How?
16. Do asylum seekers and refugees' legal status exclude them from accessing national and community-based social protection services?
17. Does the perception of organisation staff influence the service provision?
18. Do you think refugees face discrimination and stereotypical issues in access to service provision? How can they be addressed?
19. How does the refugee strategise to overcome the constraints in access?
20. How do you overcome the constraints to provide services to asylum seekers and refugees?

Socio-political context

21. How does the broader political context define who can access social protection and on what terms?

22. What are the legal provisions for the social protection of asylum seekers and refugees?
23. Do the current policies in the UK influence the access and provision of service to asylum seekers and refugees? And how?
    a. What factors should be considered in dispersing refugees?
24. How can better matches be created between dispersal and refugee needs?
25. Do you resist the policy-level requirements to assist asylum seekers and refugees?
26. What approaches can be followed to educate service providers on the needs of asylum seekers and refugees?
27. How well are various services coordinated within the regional/local authorities?
28. Does social protection enable asylum seekers and refugees to improve their capabilities?

Integration

29. What is your opinion about integration?
    a. What is integration?
    b. How can you define integration?
30. In your opinion, do ASRs feel integrated?
31. Do you think access to formal social protection shapes the integration of asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow?
32. Apart from the existing services, what should be done to integrate them?
33. What is your opinion about New Scots strategies? (pros and cons).
34. In conclusion, is there anything else we haven't discussed that you wish we had?

A4. Participant Information Sheet

Who am I?

I am Niroshan Ramachandran, PhD Researcher in the Department of Social Sciences at Edge Hill University.

What is this research about?

The title of this research is 'Asylum Seekers and Refugees' Perceptions and Experiences of Formal Social Protection Services in the UK'. This project is investigating the perceptions and experiences of asylum seekers and refugees about social protection, how service providers are practising and performing their anticipated roles in social protection within the restricted environment (practice and policy level) and the extent to which asylum seekers and refugees have been affected. This research is part of my PhD at Edge Hill University in the UK.

What is expected of you?

I would like to conduct one interview with you. The interview should last around one hour.

What will be in the interviews?

This interview will be about your perception and experiences of social protection services in the UK (Glasgow), and the difficulties and assistance you may have had to access social protection services. Initially, you will be asked about your needs and expectations upon arrival. Later, it will continue with questions to unfold your experiences in social protection.

Do you have to take part?

No. You are free to choose whether or not to take part. If you agree to take part but later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the study within 28 days after the interview, and you do not have to give a reason.

If you wish to take part, firstly, you need to read this sheet. I will be available for questions via phone or email. Once you are satisfied with the relevant information and happy to take part, you have to give your consent by signing the consent form. Please read the consent form before placing your signature. We would then agree on a convenient date and place for an interview of up to one hour.

If you do take part, you can refuse to answer any questions that I ask at any stage.

Is it confidential? If you take part, you will not be identified. No information that could identify you will be used anywhere.

Most importantly, your decision to participate or not to participate will not affect or shape the service you have received in the past or are receiving or will receive.

Moreover, your participation is voluntary, and I will not be able to provide any monetary or material compensation for your time and effort.

What will happen to the information?

The information you will be sharing is for the sole purpose of my PhD study. If you accept, our interview will be recorded so that I can transcribe it later. If you prefer, I will not record it; I will instead take notes from the interview.

Any identifying details, including your name, where you live, etc., will be removed from transcript and field notes. It will be typed up pseudonyms and the files stored on an encrypted password-protected computer.

I will use quote extracts from the interview in my thesis, reports and articles. However, I will ensure that the quotes presented in the written materials will not identify you. Further, if possible, I would be happy to share a summary of the research results.

Furthermore, data collected may be made available, in anonymised form, to independent internal and external third parties in accordance with standard University audit procedures.

If you do not want to take part or if you decide during the process that you would like to withdraw, please let me know and you will not be contacted again.

What should you do if you have any more questions?

You can ask me,

Niroshan Ramachandran

Email – ramachan@edgehill.ac.uk

Tel: +44 073 99 564 509

You can also speak to my supervisor,

Dr Zana Vathi

Email: zana.vathi@edgehill.ac.uk

Tel: 016 95 584 623

You can also speak to the following senior members of the department:

Professor Tom Cockburn

Head of Department of Social Sciences, Edge Hill University

Email: tom.cockburn@edgehill.ac.uk

Tel: 016 95 584072

Professor Mark McGovern

Chair of the Social Sciences Department Research Ethics Committee, Edge Hill University

Email: mark.mcgovern@edgehill.ac.uk

Tel: 016 95 584621

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. I would be delighted if you would be willing to take part.

A5. Consent Form

Project Title - Asylum Seekers and Refugees' Perceptions and Experiences of Formal Social Protection Services in the UK

Please tick as appropriate

1 I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet. I have had the opportunity to review the information and ask questions.

2 I understand that participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw within 28 days after the interview, without having to give a reason.

3 I agree to an audio recording of the interviews being made.

I understand that the information I give will be recorded and stored securely.

4 I understand that extracts from the interview will be used by the researcher in future reports, articles or and/or presentations, without revealing my identity.

5 I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles and/or presentations.

6 I hereby consent to take part in this study and agree that my participation has been fully explained to me

Name of the participant:

Signature:

Date:

A6. Confidentiality Agreement with Interpreters

Project Title - Asylum Seekers and Refugees' Perceptions and Experiences of Social Protection Services in the UK

I, _____ understand that as an Interpreter in this study, my responsibility is to facilitate communication between the participant and researcher that do not speak or understand the same language. **All information discussed between the participant and the researcher is considered to be and will remain 'confidential' during and after my involvement as an interpreter in this project.**

I agree to hold the confidentiality of the information discussed in the interviews. At the conclusion of the interview, I agree to return all written information (i.e., forms, notes, etc.) provided to me for the purposes of conducting such meeting/activity.

Agreed and Accepted by:

Name of the Interpreter :

Signature :

Date :

Name of the Researcher :

Signature :

Date :

A7. List of third-sector organisations contacted / involved in this research

Name	Activities/Groups
South East Integration Network	• Sharing information • Advocating on behalf of member organisations • Providing access to training opportunities • Organising events • Offering funding for projects • Acting as a hub for integration work in the south east of Glasgow
North Glasgow Integration Network	• Women's Group • ESOL • Cooking classes • Youth groups • Welfare support
Central and West Integration Network	• Youth club • Women's group • ESOL classes • Drop-in services • Food bank • Men's group
Maryhill Integration Network	• ESOL Classes • Dance and Theatre Production Project • Women's Group • Men's Group • Community Choir • Garden Club
Govan Community Project (formerly Govan and Craigton Integration network)	• ESOL • Homework club • Women's group • Men's group • Food distribution • Drop-ins • Advice, information and advocacy • Cultural events • Destitution food project • An interpreting service
Maslows	• Free clothing • Household goods • ESOL

Name	Activities/Groups
	• Food
Bridging the Gap	• Big Thursday's drop-in • High Rise Bakers • Community events • Dry ration
Castlemilk Community Church	• Furniture and household goods support • ESOL • IT classes • Weekly international lunch
Scottish Action for Refugees (SAFR)	• Drop-in for support, information and signposting • To use computers • Washing facilities
Glasgow City Church	• Dry ration • English classes
Glasgow City Mission	• Evening drop-ins • Signposting • Free meal
The Unity Centre	• Drop-ins • Sharing information and signposting • Food vouchers • Advocacy
The Scottish Refugee Council	• Information sharing and signposting • Advocacy • Support for new refugees • Destitution advice • Training • Research, policy and campaigns
The British Red Cross	• Emotional support • Orientation • Assisting with appointments • Benefits and career advice • Travel support
Positive Action in Housing	• Advice • Emergency support • Room for refugees • Signposting
Bridges Programme	• Provide training • Skills training

Name	Activities/Groups
	• Support, advice and work placements
Govan Help	• ESOL • Counselling • Signposting • Volunteer programmes
Refuweegee	• Welcoming and befriending • Family support • Emergency support